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MUSINGS

OVER

THE "CHRISTIAN YEAR," &c.

ERRATUM.

p. clxv. line 6, *for* Kay *read* Hey.

MUSINGS

OVER THE

CHRISTIAN YEAR" AND "LYRA INNOCENTIUM,"

BY

CHARLOTTE MARY YONGE;

TOGETHER WITH A FEW

GLEANINGS OF RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

REV. JOHN KEBLE,

110861

GATHERED BY SEVERAL FRIENDS.

"Thy book I love because thyself is there."—*Rev. I. Williams.*

Oxford and London:
JAMES PARKER AND CO.
1871.

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GLEANINGS FROM THIRTY YEARS' INTERCOURSE WITH THE LATE REV. JOHN KEBLE.

I SUPPOSE it is a testimony to the peculiarly deep and individual influence of the late Vicar of Hursley upon all who came in contact with him, that it seems impossible to speak of him without also dwelling upon oneself. One did not merely look at him externally as a great man, but he became a part of one's life.

Perhaps this is the case more especially with the recollections I am here about to record, because living only two miles apart, and neither party being ever long absent from home, the intercourse was chiefly personal, and the notes that passed are hardly comprehensible without reference to conversations that had led to them.

There are many whose first idea of Mr. Keble was as the best, kindest, drollest, and most patient of playmates, and who, only gradually and wonderingly, awoke to the sense of his greatness and fame. I was not one of these, for I was twelve or thirteen years old at the

time of his appointment to Hursley Vicarage, and had begun to study the "Christian Year," so that it was with awe and reverence for the first poet I had ever seen that I looked at him from the first, viewing the Vicarage in its quiet beauty as a sort of charmed ground where it was a privilege to tread.

The great delight of the summer in those days was a school-feast, at which all the children of the united parishes of Hursley and Otterbourne were collected to drink tea on the Vicarage lawn, and play in the Park. The festival was always intended to take place on Ascension-day, but it was the exception when the season was warm enough for Holy Thursday to be adhered to, and notes were usually despatched on a promising morning in Whitsun-week or even "St. Barnaby bright," summoning the schools to four o'clock service, followed by unlimited tea, cake, and play.

These were days of extreme delight. Kind words were spoken to the children, their quaint ways were watched with pleasure, their little difficulties smoothed, and the sight in itself was a very pretty one. Tables were spread on the flat part of the lawn between the terrace and churchyard wall, and the bright-faced flock looked almost as if some of the garlands they often brought had become animated. Afterwards they were marched up to the Park, where the boys had their never-failing cricket, and the girls scattered in pic-

turesque groups under the trees—with the exclusiveness of village-children, the several schools keeping separate, except when combined in grand games by the younger guests. The guests were only those connected with the schools, all intimate friends, and there was a pleasant merry dropping in of these, to take their seats at the big table in the small dining-room, and be supplied from the inexhaustible teapot. Then, in the twilight, the children came back to the lawn, and sang. How exquisite it used to be, to stand on the terrace in the fresh evening scents of early summer, the grey church tower rising among the flowering shrubs,—the weeping gold chains of the laburnum and the crimson tufts of the shumach, with straight dark horizontal bars of cedar thrust between, the stars gradually gleaming out, or a round full moon rising, and the children's voices, softened in the open air, pealing out in "God save the Queen," and finally in Ken's Evening Hymn; the universal hum of "thank you, ma'am," Mr. Keble's public "Good night," and the cheers of the boys dying away with the trampling feet in the distance.

Many and many such evenings do I remember, so that they blend together in one picture and cannot be separated. At first, holidays, true holidays, are the most vivid recollections that return to me; but at fifteen I became a catechumen of Mr. Keble's, and this I would call the great influence of my life did I not feel

unworthy to do so; but of this I am sure, that no one else, save my own father, had so much to do with my whole cast of mind.

Otterbourne Rectory is united with Hursley, so that the Rector of the one is the Vicar of the other; but having a parish church of our own, it was as a sort of outlying sheep that I was allowed to be prepared by him for the confirmation of the year 1838. I went to him twice a-week from August to October, and after the first awe, the exceeding tenderness and gentleness of his treatment made me perfectly at home with him. I fancy I was his first young lady scholar, and that he was rather feeling his way, for I have heard from later pupils of a fuller and more minute instruction, beginning sooner and continuing longer than mine. That, however, was everything to me. Starting from a child's technical familiarity with the Catechism and Bible, and from the misty theology of one *taught* orthodoxly, but confused by indiscriminate reading of Tract Society books (then children's only Sunday fare), he opened to me the perception of the Church, her Sacraments and her foundation, and prepared me to enter into the typical teaching of Scripture. The questions he gave to be answered in the intervals witness to the course of his teaching.

After examining into the true import of Confirmation, he went through the Catechism with me, dwelling (when we came to the Commandments) on the point that the

whole Israelite nation stood as the type of each Christian person, so that what was said to them nationally applies to us individually. After this, we went through the ritual for each of the two great Sacraments, comparing step by step with elder liturgies, chiefly using Palmer's *Origines Liturgicæ*, and he translating from Greek authorities. This must have been to convey a true sense of the purport of the service, and according to his humble practice, rather by force of inference than by direct instruction of his own, except when explanation was asked for.

It must have visibly impressed and excited me considerably, for his two warnings, when he gave me my ticket, were,—the one against much talk and discussion of Church matters, especially doctrines, the other against the danger of loving these things for the sake merely of their beauty and poetry—æsthetically he would have said, only that he would have thought the word affected.

This was thirty-one years ago, in the prime interest and blossom of "Tracts for the Times," and when, though Hursley had daily matins and evensong, the Church was still in its positive ugliness, and few advances had been made, but when all was vigour, hope and progress, and the choicest intellects had come under the influence of the teaching of which that study was one of the sources. Yet have not unrestrained talk

and mere æsthetic admiration been always among the chief perils of those doctrines; both as leading to false impressions from without, and to unreality within.

After all, association does not need beauty, for the Confirmation poem in the "Christian Year" always brings before me the square pew in the chancel whence I was "beckoned up," and the enormous blank space of the great round-arched east window, unrelieved except by the waving of the trees outside: to which, by the way, an old woman objected, as thinking it unscriptural to "worship in a grove."

Happiness seems always connected with Hursley in those young days. A lingering cough, in the spring of 1839, led to my spending a fortnight at the Vicarage; and this rendered it altogether another home, where for twenty-seven years every joy and care were alike carried to those who could "make grief less bitter, joy less wild." I never saw anyone with such perfect power of sympathy as Mrs. Keble, not merely winning confidence, but administering a check, without producing either annoyance, shyness, or future reserve. Therewith there was a great force of influence and of inspiring interest in wholesome pursuits, or giving assistance where they existed. She lent drawings to be copied, discussed books, and enjoyed by hearsay any pleasure that had been that of others, or rather doubled it by her reception of the narrative. She had, to a great extent, that which

Mrs. Stowe has happily termed "faculty," and did with a peculiar grace whatever came under her hand; as might be seen in her household, her drawing-room, and her dress, which always had a choiceness and simplicity of their own,—the most complete refinement; but as time went on, though means increased rather than diminished, there was more and more a dispensing with matters of mere luxury and worldly requirement.

The Rev. William Heygate, (Rector of Brighstone) gives this testimony: "The stillness of Hursley Vicarage was very remarkable. All went on without noise or effort. It was a calm, but not oppressive—not a dead calm, but a quiet sea, sparkling and bright. Everything fell into its place, or rather *was* in its place, and the visitor fell into the system, or rather the life, naturally."

Mrs. Keble's transparent complexion, clear hazel eyes, and regular features, were most exquisite in their fragility and unearthliness in this comparative youth (thirty-two when I first recollect her); nor was there ever much change, except that after the fever caught at Bude, the youthful tinting became more fixed, and the features enlarged, but the beauty was hardly dimmed even to the very last. "She looks like a poet's wife," as an American Bishop said.

Another friend, L. H., adds: "There was a peculiar brightness and softness about her and her dress. Bright colours never looked out of place upon her, and Mr.

Keble liked them. She used to say that if ever she was 'deluded' into anything very brilliant, and felt a little ashamed of it, Mr. Keble was sure to remark and admire it. It was wonderful how little anyone who did not know her would have suspected her of suffering. She was a perfect wife, exactly filling *in* and filling *up* the little want of worldly wisdom (or attention more truly) which would have made him helpless alone."

I must return, however, to those sunny early days. There was complete accordance between our families. My father and mother were both children of clergymen of the same old-fashioned orthodox type as old Mr. Keble of Fairford, and to them the Hursley teaching seemed nothing new, only the full consequence of what they had always learnt. And my father's strong, practical, uncompromising nature, tempered with great tenderness and susceptibility, his chivalry, loyalty, and thoroughness were exceedingly congenial to Mr. Keble, and they worked together in a manner that always reminded me of the friendship of Laud and Strafford. It was at this time that Otterbourne Church was being built, and a good deal of positive pioneering in the way of Church Architecture was going on between them, of which the church as it stands is the material evidence—cross-shaped, but with a chancel purposely shallow, because both felt the impropriety of using it for sittings, and choirs in the country were undreamt of—and altogether

an effort towards better things. There was much consultation while thus feeling the way, and how many rolls of cartridge-paper travelled backwards and forwards along King's Lane would be dangerous to guess.

During the visit I have spoken of, Wishart's "Life of Montrose" was in course of being read. There was much reading aloud at the Vicarage, often at meals, and much lively conversation over the books—with a certain playful banter passing between the two sides of the house, each inheriting a slight infusion of Scottish blood, and finding their ancestors on opposite sides. In those days, the 30th of January used to be regularly observed at Hursley, though it was afterwards given up on principle with the other State holidays, before they were expunged from the Prayer-book. Mr. Keble's personal love for King Charles could not alter, it was the tender veneration he expressed in his poem for "Our own, our royal Saint," but it was not blind. I remember in after years his half-whispering, in the tone in which he would have confessed an error in a living and beloved friend, that King Charles's failures in truth were evident to one whose opinion he relied on.

History was always much read and keenly realized, as well as Travels—those in Palestine and in Switzerland being the favourites. The authors most constantly read and beloved were, it seems to me, Dante, Spenser, Wordsworth, Scott and Manzoni. I doubt if

Mr. Keble could have been puzzled in seeking a line in Shakespeare; Scott he heartily loved; and there is a beautiful and characteristic critique, in the "British Critic," of his upon Lockhart's Life, a kind of overflow from the *Prælectiones;* and a very remarkable tracing of the influence of the Waverley novels on the tone of mind of the age, regarding the feeling for chivalry, loyalty, and romance as having prepared the way for a higher allegiance to the Church. None of Scott's novels, however, did he admire or value as much as Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi*, which had been the first book he and Mrs. Keble read together after their marriage. When his sister was in the house, her voice was always available, and almost all the works of real and innocent interest that a country book-club procured were thus enjoyed; but there was a shrinking from slang and irreverence, and a distaste to mere speculation, which somewhat diminished the range of current literature. "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely," was the guide of taste; and the unlovely, whether rude, coarse, derisive, or over painful, was put aside. Nor was there much inclination to physical science, only to what may be called the poetical side of natural history; pleasure in the beauty and intelligence of animals, and in all that related to flowers. Both Mr. and Mrs. Keble took interest in botany, and —except the famous rhododendron, and the "towering

thorn,"—I believe there is not a single incorrectness as to the plants in all his poetry. Though his short sight prevented him from distinguishing birds, he had a very keen eye for a new flower.

One of the pleasantest expeditions I remember was of our families united to Parnholt wood, which clothes one side of Farley Mount, a hill above Hursley, and is famous as the abode of lilies of the valley, herb paris and bee and fly orchids. To me the most memorable part of the adventure was the sharing the front seat of Mr. Keble's low phaëton as he drove his old "flea-bitten grey" horse, Strawberry. The reigning horse was always treated as a pet with a character of his own, but Mr. Keble did not excel in either riding or driving, partly from near sight, partly from being often what his old gardener called "in a stud." Indeed, on the day before his marriage, when riding from Stroud after procuring the licence, he had been thrown into a ditch, broken his collar-bone, and was unable to rise until some passer-by assisted him. He arrived at home very late, but did not think himself so much hurt as to put off the wedding, and the extent of the injury was not discovered till two or three days after. When driving out, Mrs. Keble generally read to him, and on this occasion he had brought with him the poems competing for the Newdigate prize which were submitted to him as Professor of Poetry. The subject was the "Judgment of Brutus," and I recol-

lect his explaining the word *iconoclast* which occurred in one, and likewise that he always discovered some merit in each, discouraging pert or captious fault-finding, but that he most inclined towards one which took the original line of sympathizing with the sons as victims to their loyalty, and viewing Brutus as a rebel under a delusion—but I believe that this was not the successful composition.

The Lectures on Poetry were at this time in hand, and it was astonishing to see those discourses in course of being written on small scraps of paper. Often with the corner of the mantel-piece serving as a desk—indeed it seemed to suit Mr. Keble particularly well, as it brought the paper close to his sight, and he used to stand, his spectacles pushed back over his forehead, turning round with eyes dancing with fun, a comic smile, and shoulders a little shrugged and then suddenly drawn down low after his wont, when he uttered a bit of playful mischief. He could write in the midst of all manner of conversation, and take a full share in it, or listen to reading. He said that as a little boy he had often learnt his Latin Grammar while throwing his ball against the garden wall and catching it again; and this power of double attention was certainly natural rather than acquired. It lessened with increasing age and care, but at the date of which I am now speaking he was in full vigour of body and mind, enjoying stronger

health than had been his lot earlier in life, and full of alertness and activity.

I have still a few fragments saved from the nonsense-poetical games of those merry evenings — preserved I am afraid rather undutifully, for when he caught me securing the pencilled scraps of what was called in that family "Arcadia," he told me it was disgusting. Yet I cannot help giving one of his answers, the question having been "How old are you?"—the word to be introduced "Apple-dumpling."

> "By the help of bread and butter,
> Apple-dumpling, eggs and beer,
> If the truth I needs must utter,
> I have droned near fifty year."

When a young lady, a good many years later, begged for his "likes and dislikes" for her book, he gave as his favourite motto, "Least said soonest mended." In a more serious mood, when complying with a request for an autograph for a copy of the "Christian Year," he said he would add the motto he had chosen, "Love is a present for a mighty king."

This was for a friend's friend, whom he knew and esteemed, but in general the whole autograph and lion-hunting system was most unpleasant to him—both as wounding his humility and vexing his shyness; and but for the possibility of laughing at it, it would have been

unendurable. His best friends never asked him for an autograph without compulsion, laughing it off, and feeling that he was an obedient victim, and the audacious requests that came from strangers were always matter of diversion. One lady, perfectly unknown, finding herself lodging in the same house at a watering-place, sent in her album to demand the list of his likes and dislikes; but perhaps the boldest admirer of all was a bridegroom who wished to present all the bridesmaids with reminiscences of the day, and accordingly sent a number of sheets of satin wove paper with a request that a verse of poetry might be written upon each!

Altogether I think the first ten or twelve years at Hursley must have been the happiest in the Vicar's life. Everything was full of hope and progress. It was the time when the flower of intellectual life at Oxford seemed to be blossoming for the Church, and when fresh conquests were being made on every side. It is true that long before this his poetry had expressed a sense of decay in the Church, a resignation of bright hopes and day dreams, and a spirit of patient endurance; but the "Christian Year" itself had not then begun its work, and the voices which had awakened, and were awakening, around at the trumpet-call were full of hope and energy, while at home he was rejoiced by Church-building and work in the parish and schools, which, with all drawbacks, was enjoyment.

How individual was his work! He was newly come, when a boy so misbehaved that Mrs. Heathcote, the chief patroness of the school, thought he ought to be expelled. The Vicar concurred, but shortly after Mrs. Heathcote found that he was regularly teaching the boy in private.

L. H. says: "I once went with him into a cottage, and was present while he heard a young girl repeat a lesson which she had learnt as part of her preparation for confirmation. It was upon the parable of the lost sheep, and his explanation was so true and homely, so completely clearing away the notion of a great sinner being more acceptable to the Good Shepherd than the ninety-nine. 'If one of the family,' he said, 'were ill, would the rest of you take it hard that the father and mother spent more time and gave more care to that one, not because they loved it more, but for the time it would take up anybody's attention.' And afterwards a verse in the Revelation, 'They are without guile.' 'That means, quite true and honest in thought, word, and deed. If a person were quite honest, it would go a long way to making him a saint. He would be true in word, true in his thought of himself and of other people, true and just in all his dealing.'"

It is a loss not to know more of the manner of that school-work, but I only once heard him give a lesson (it was on St. John vii.), only once saw the Hursley

Sunday schools, but conversations on the work and individual scholars often went on between us, as matters of business. The great characteristic of Hursley teaching, was the great quantity of Scripture which the children were encouraged to learn by heart in connection with any subject on which they were being instructed; as, for instance, when being taught the duties of Christian service, they were to learn the history of Naaman's little maid, and of Gehazi, and the exhortations to servants in the Epistles. The village-mistress was then a simple, homely, motherly body, without training or system, but, as they said, "Sally Ranger made the girls so good." As she became superannuated, the advantages of trained teachers from diocesan schools were thoroughly appreciated. After the first examination by the Government Inspector, Mr. Keble came in much pleased. "I am convinced," he said, "that examinations are very good things, I wish I had been more examined. It would have been very good for me." Then, dropping his voice, "Do you know, I am almost ashamed to tell you, I never was examined for my Ordination."

It was for Sunday-school needs that my mother undertook the compilation of the "Child's Christian Year." At that time there really was no hymn-book in use but Dr. Watts's and Jane Taylor's, and I remember Mr. Keble pointing out the wonderful exaggeration when the latter declares:—

"I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone."

He held that "something more difficult" should be presented to the poor, feeling that puerility, in contradistinction to simplicity, is a sort of insult.

The poems were collected from many sources, chiefly books lent from the Vicarage, the best of all of these being the remains of Professor Joseph Anstice, whom Mr. Keble had known at Oxford. Strange to say, these hymns were privately printed; he had advised against their being published, thinking they would not be popular, and was quite surprised at my father's great delight in them.

The first letter I can find from him is on this subject, on returning the book in which my mother had copied out the collection, and which still bears witness of his careful and minute revision.

"HURSLEY,
Dec. 2, 1840.

"MY DEAR MRS. YONGE,

"I have read over the Hymns and made some notes and suggestions which I hope you will be able to decypher, but I trust to come over in a few days and talk the whole matter over with you. I have no doubt it will be a very nice little book, but I doubt whether it will be much plainer in cha-

racter than others which are counted too hard. In fact, is *great plainness possible* on these high subjects? . . . . .

"Yours ever aff^ly,

(*Signed*) J. KEBLE."

Thinking Bishop Heber's "Innocents' Day" too well known for her purpose, my mother wrote a poem for that festival herself, which he said "would do very well, but wanted condensing." The matter was forgotten till the proofs were actually coming in, with a blank page for Innocents' Day—decidedly too short for *her* poem, which began from Bethlehem at David's anointing. She sent the proof over to Hursley, and it came back with the present exquisite little poem, starting from her first line. The name, too, of the whole book was his choice. Some little whisper he made of having once thought of writing a "Christian Year" for children, but this was scarcely heard, though it must have been the first intimation of the *Lyra Innocentium*, from which I now believe he gave away the intended name.

It seems to me that the sunny time of which I have been speaking is reflected in the portrait of 1843. The picture was achieved in this manner. Sir J. T. Coleridge was lamenting the non-existence of any likeness of Mr. Keble; "You catch painter," said my father, "and I'll catch sitter." And, accordingly, a meeting was arranged by them between Mr. Keble and Mr. Richmond at Otterbourne, and the curate (both predecessor

and survivor of his "Master") left home, saying that if the daily service was intermitted, it must be Mr. Keble's doing. And Mr. Keble was so happy in Mr. Richmond's society that he resigned himself most amiably, and the effect shines in those beautiful eyes, which the artist deprived of their spectacles all day long that he might know them better. They were very dark brown, but outside each iris was a most peculiar greyish ring, to which much of their remarkable *beaminess* seemed to me to be owing. Little children used to say of the print, "There's Mr. Keble smiling more than ever;" and I have heard of both Maories and Zulus being attracted by the sunny smiling gaze; Mrs. Keble used to say that while this print shewed the poet, the later one shewed the scholar, and she longed for one more —of the pastor.

In one of the intervals of those sittings, I had a long walk by the river side with Mr. Keble: I had been trying, with the endeavours of a girl of twenty, to understand the grounds of the controversy with Rome, after the ordinary popular Protestant calumnies had been one by one removed from my mind; and whatever I then knew myself to be unable to fathom, I laid before him. What individual answers he made I cannot recollect, but the summing up was, "No doubt we could ask Roman Catholics many questions they could not answer, and they could ask us many which we could

not answer; we can only each go on in our own way, holding to the truth that we know we have." I believe, also, that he then spoke of the unity of the invisible Church.

But this question was becoming the great shadow that hung over us. His own feeling towards Rome (as it seems to me) had been in early life that of the old-fashioned Anglican (witness the sonnet at page 204 of the "Miscellaneous Poems"); but with ever-deepening study of Church history and of the doctors of the Church, as well as with the clearing up and explanation of numerous Roman Catholic practices, this was greatly modified, and the sense of the national sins connected with the Reformation, and of the losses we had sustained, became more and more strong. "I like the Plantagenet kings the best, the Stewarts the next best," he said, (I think) in talking over Miss Strickland's "Queens." "As to Edward VI. he was Henry VIII. in a bib and tucker, Elizabeth was Henry VIII. in a hoop petticoat; Queen Mary was the best of them." And this feeling was, perhaps, at the strongest during those years which produced the *Lyra Innocentium*. It never was disloyalty to the Catholic Church of England, but it was a yearning for unity, and it grew by the increasing perception of the slightness of the differences between us, and the narrowing of the cleft that sunders these two rocks of the holy mountain. One saying, half in play, half in earnest,

was that Cologne Cathedral will never be finished till the Church is united. The early days of Pius IX., too, almost warranted the hope of a drawing near being possible.

Then came the reverses that one by one fell upon the cause—the popular cry; the charges of Bishops, partly prejudiced, partly impelled by the voice of the ignorant; the authoritative silencing of the Tracts; all that we have seen described in the *Apologia;* and, most keenly felt of all, that which rendered the *Apologia* necessary. In this last matter, when the final blow came, it seemed as if the strength and cheering needed to carry him through, had been given by Mrs. Keble's recovery from her dangerous fever, and becoming much less fragile than she had been in earlier life. The other defections were most keenly and grievously felt, always in infinite charity, but for that very reason with the more pain. Many were of persons dear to him, and many more consulted him, or were brought to consult him by friends when too late, just as a celebrated physician is sought by a dying person, and indeed restless roaming to take one opinion after another always seemed to be a symptom. All this caused him much strain of mind and suffering; for having the deepest, truest allegiance to his own Mother Church, and the strongest sense that to leave her was to incur the sin of schism, he yet could not conscientiously declare either the one Church to be

wholly right or the other wholly wrong. His advice to wait patiently, fix the mind on the tokens of indwelling grace, and to pray for unity, was exactly what less patient spirits would not, or could not, understand or take.

Mr. Heygate mentions his having said of one who had joined the Church of Rome, "I can't think how he brought his truthful mind to join in with them." I remember something of the same kind, his saying that he was more convinced of their want of truth in dealing with people. This was probably under the fresh intelligence of some underhand dealing in bringing over converts, of which there were instances that greatly displeased him.

About this time he worked out the controversy more fully than he had ever faced it before, and declared himself more completely convinced of our own ground than ever. He said to Mr. Heygate, speaking of the Holy Eucharist, "The only points on which I can see the Roman Catholics to be in the wrong are the doctrine of Transubstantiation and Concomitancy." The latter clearly included the disuse of the cup. He was satisfied, therefore, adds Mr. Heygate, with their authorized doctrine of the Sacrifice, though not with their popular teaching past and present on this head. The same friend records his replying to a refutation of the allegation that our own Church was dead or dying with words that meant much from him, "Yours gratefully."

Looking back, it seems to me that in the years between 1840 and 1850 changed the aspect of things from that previous brightness. Before, it had been like Jeshua and Zerubbabel building up the Temple on their first return, when the ruins were raised up, and the great mountain became a plain; afterwards, it was as when Cyrus was dead, and the decree had come forth to stop the building, and yet still Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the faithful restorers and defenders of their Jerusalem. Cheerfulness was there, but it was the cheerfulness of patience more than of hope, or rather the hope was the hope of faith not of sight.

And when things were most perplexing, and the heaviest shocks were in full force, a child, or a child's festival, or a great holy day, had a striking power of making him put off cares and griefs, and be thoroughly happy and blithe, taking this as the due of the festival, and becoming thoroughly exhilarated with what was really holy joy. The delight in scenery, children, animals, flowers, and books, was as fresh as ever.

In the spring of 1845 my mother spent a fortnight at the Vicarage, and talked to Mrs. Keble of the stories I used to scribble at all spare moments with some ambition to see them in print, and the result was that the reigning tale, "Abbeychurch," was taken to Hursley to be advised upon. Thus began a course of kindness that seems so inconceivable in one so much occupied,

that I should deem it the mere presumption of my memory if I had not the evidence in my hands.

For at least twelve or fifteen years, I never did any literary work without talking it over with Mr. and Mrs. Keble, referring difficulties to them, and generally shewing the MS., which used to come back with little touches of pencil, and a list of references to words or phrases, shewing the diligence of the revision. This practice was of course gradually slackened, as it became plain that the decreasing strength of these dear friends must not be taxed without necessity, and, therefore, I only asked questions or submitted passages that might be doubtful. Mr. Heygate says likewise, "He not only never refused, but never seemed the least unwilling to accept the revision of MS., though badly written and obscurely expressed."

Indeed, Mr. Keble was by far the best reviser I ever knew. Unmethodical and somewhat careless as he was in matters of daily life, he was all precision and accuracy when he had a MS. or proof before him. So Mr. Heygate says, "Mr. Keble was singularly accurate; he complained to me of a common carelessness in quotation of Holy Scripture, and of one writer in particular, whom he often revised, and constantly found wrong in this particular, because the citations were habitually unverified." He had a droll story of old Dr. Routh, the President of Magdalen, being asked by a young man

for a piece of advice to carry with him through life, when the President gravely said, "Always verify quotations." He never allowed a reference to be taken direct from a Concordance without looking it out in the Bible: I think he felt it a kind of irreverence.

Manuscripts and proofs came back, not only marked where there was some great blunder or some salient passage needed re-writing, but with the least details touched up, turns of sentences to avoid the barbarous modern possessive *its*, and diligent reformations of slip-slop language. May I note a few special marks of his hand? In the first draught of the story in "Abbey-church," the disobedient expedition on which all turns was kept a secret by the guilty parties out of deference for one another. He said there were so many stories where the good girl keeps a secret for the sake of some one else, and he did not think it natural. I suggested that the whole plot depended on the concealment; "Yes;" he said, "but suppose Elizabeth tells her stepmother, and she being a very good woman, keeps it from her husband." Turning back to the book, I see how much liberty he left, only checking some of the pedantry. The "Conversations on the Catechism" were, from beginning to end, closely revised by him. The only one he did not look over was that on the Forgiveness of Sins, which was in type during his one continental trip, but which was finally retouched by him.

Most of the short notes to myself refer to these conversations, but they are mostly mere fragments, little more than, "I return *this*. You will see what I have marked." There are, however, a few going more into detail. The following was called forth by that conversation on the first article of the Creed, in which I had striven to explain how philosophy had reasoned out the existence of a God, and how natural religion sprung from that belief; but I believe I had not made clear the idea that religion as a moral principle of action was not solely the belief in the existence of a God, but in His being a Power rewarding and punishing; not only "that He is," but that "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him:"—

"HURSLEY,
30 *June*, 1851.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

"I hope I have not put you out by keeping this so long. I have been rather more busy than usual. This is an interesting matter, and I wish I had more time and knowledge for it. It will do very well as you have put it. But against a reprint, or with a view to a supplementary dialogue, it may be well to consider (what is implied in the word *Moral*, which I have inserted in one place) that Religion begins when we believe that *God is good*, and that the prevailing form of irreligion in the world has not been disbelief of a *natural* Governor, but a notion of an Evil Principle in one form or another. See Bp. Butler's Analogy, part i.

"It occurred to me whether, when the ladies quote Greek,

they had not better say they have heard their fathers and brothers say things.

"Always yours affectionately,
J. K."

Again, I find a letter answering a question on some of the difficulties in the genealogy in St. Matthew, another suggesting that some remark was "not quite suitable to Mary," the village girl interlocutor. The following upon the conversation on the foundation of the Church goes more into detail:—

"*H. V.*, 7 *June*, 1853.

"MY DEAR CHILD,

"I hope I have not embarrassed you by keeping these slips till now.

"I a little doubt about the bits of Greek you put in, and I certainly should advise more to be said about Pentecost. There was a Church in a kind of sense, but according to my understanding there was no Church in the proper sense until then—vid. S. John vii. 39, &c., and the many places in which the Church is said to go out from Zion. Do you not think there is some danger of your crowding too much matter into these brief dialogues, I mean danger of their being less interesting and useful than they might be. . . . .

"Yours aff^te^,
J. K."

Most corrections were however made by word of mouth, and have left no record. When at length, after six or seven years, the Conversations were collected into a volume, I wished that he should write the preface

with his initials as a sanction. Here is the answer to my request.

"*H. V.*, 24 *Novr.*, /58.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

"On considering the matter I have come to think it inexpedient that my initials should appear in your book. You see it is quite a different case from the ordinary ones in which that is done. It is not an unknown little bird waiting to be affectionately jerked out of the nest. So far there is no need of an 'imprimatur,' and do you not think that under the circumstances, it is undesirable to let people think or say (as they are too likely to do) that this is only Mr. Keble speaking with another voice? If there is any force in the phrase 'independent testimony,' I think it is worth considering in this case.

"This, I own, seems to me decisive; but I have also the scruple that I should have to make mention of these other books in a way more suitable for you, seeing that I have not read them; and moreover considering the great quantity of ground which your book covers directly and incidentally, and that I have not seen, as a critic, the whole of it, I should have to say that warmly as I approve and admire it, I could not make myself responsible for every statement and opinion.

"I hope this will not vex you, and I am very sorry to have delayed you to no purpose. If you, on consideration, still wish it, and will give me your reasons, I will *reconsider*, for I hate not saying Yes to you.

"Your very aff^te^,
J. K."

I did not torment him with "reasons," but I never quite knew what he meant by his not having read the

whole as a critic—either he forgot how much he had read, or he had kept himself from touching anything that did not strike him as a positive error in fact or doctrine. I incline to this latter opinion, from what he says of independent testimony. He certainly did not give advice as to the general plan, or subjects; all he did was to read the proofs and mark what was wrong, or when I was in a difficulty help me out by lending books, or consulting them when the point turned upon Greek or Hebrew.

These conversations were the work of five or six years, and in the midst came the "Heir of Redclyffe," and here let me be excused for telling the history of that book—since he was not unconcerned in it. In the May of 1850, a friend told me there were two characters she wanted to see brought out in a story, namely, the essentially contrite and the self-satisfied. Good men, we agreed, were in most of the books of the day, subdued by the memory of some involuntary disaster,—generally the killing some one out shooting, whereas the "penitence of the saints" was unattempted. The self-satisfied hero was to rate the humble one at still lower than his own estimate, to persecute him and never be undeceived till he had caused his death. This was the germ of the tale, of which mine was the playwright work of devising action and narrative. It is less really my own than the later ones, and therefore rises much higher.

We were all very happy over it, and Mr. and Mrs. Keble shewed their usual patient goodness in listening to romancings of the yet unwritten story, and throwing their interest into it; then in reading and correcting the MS. As an instance or two, in the description of the sunset, the sun had been called a *circle*, but the poet-hand made it an *orb*. And when Mr. Edmonstone had called Philip a coxcomb, Mrs. Keble made the substitution of a jackanapes. Also, at first, Philip, in his solitude at Redclyffe had been haunted by dread of insanity; but this was altered, because both the kind critics believed it to be absolutely cruel to bring forward that topic to enhance a mere fiction, and they mentioned instances in which the suggestion of the idea had done serious harm to excitable persons already in dread of that visitation. That anxiety not to leave a stumbling-block, Mr. Heygate notices: "A good man objected to something in a tale of mine," he says, "as treating drunkenness ludicrously. I referred the matter to Mr. Keble, who justified my view at first, but afterwards said that on second thoughts, if the passage struck a good man as objectionable, I had better modify it." Again, "he advised the alteration of the end of an argument which concluded in a sarcastic and overbearing manner, saying, 'I wish you would deprive the passage of its triumphant air.'" In general the purport of the marks was to guard to the utmost both delicacy

and reverence. The very least approach to a careless reference to Holy Scripture, or that could connect with it a ludicrous idea, was always expunged. I wish my words could do justice to the kindness and good judgment of both these dear friends with regard to that book.

No one had taken more pleasure or trouble about it than my father, who had looked over every page, and conducted the arrangements for the publication. It was in the autumn of 1853 that it came out, and he was just beginning to enjoy the commencement of the favour which it received, when he was taken away, as Sir John Coleridge has told, in the February of 1854. The last meeting of the friends had been at a performance of the "Messiah" at Winchester, whence my father told us he had carried the Hallelujah Chorus in his ear through that week of hasty preparation, which, humanly speaking, broke down the strength of the strong man

> "Like a summer-dried fountain
> When our need was the sorest."

Mrs. Keble told me how they had been thinking how well and handsome he looked when he came into the concert-room. They little thought that the next time they should see that face would be in the still grandeur of Death, "in all its noble sweetness," as Mr. Keble wrote to my brother; to whom the call of the Crimean war was literally like that in the Gospel, and suffered him not to bury his father.

It would be vain to attempt to tell what Mr. and Mrs. Keble were to us in those hours of affliction—how they came to us in the cold of a February Sunday evening (no trifle for *her*), shared, soothed, elevated our grief—were all that the dearest could be, and never left us till our relations were with us; then, with tender sympathy, helped to bear us up through the long months of anxiety that ensued.

I find a note apparently about a trifle, but raising a crowd of recollections. It is to my mother, beginning, "I am afraid you will be in care about Rover, he has been here about twenty-four hours, and looks as if he wished himself at home again." The poor dog was a beautiful brown spaniel, whose loving heart was broken by the loss of his master. He never was the same dog again, and the curious thing was that though previously he had, like most dogs, quite acquiesced in not following us to church, he could never after this loss be kept at home, partly perhaps from knowing where we had left all that remained of his master, and partly from not enduring to lose sight of those left to him. If there were any cessation of daily service, or if we went from home, he would go over to Hursley, go to church in the porch, and then lie in the vicarage doorway. The tender respect, for I can call it nothing else, which Mr. Keble shewed to the poor fellow, with his gentle, wistful, dumb looks, was most touching. The last Hursley dog, or as

in Hampshire parlance the dog bears his master's surname, "Rover Keble," was named after Rover Yonge.

It was in the course of the summer of 1854 that the book, of which I have already said too much, attained its chief popularity, and shewed me how little Mr. Keble cared for worldly estimation. Not that one word of depreciation or want of sympathy was said, far from it; he enjoyed, nay, took a kind pride in its success; but when I came to him alarmed at my own sense of vainglory, he told me, "a successful book might be the trial of one's life;" shewed me how work (even of this sort) might be dedicated; how, whenever it was possible, I could explain how the real pith of the work came from another mind; and dismissed me with the concluding words of the 90th Psalm (the which has most thankfully, I own, so far been realized).

And when, in spite of all this, he saw me eager to see some "opinion of the press;" he smiled and said, "O you care for such things." Though I know he perfectly entered into the value of a sound *criticism* examining into a matter, a mere puff was nothing at all to him; and as to works of his own, I verily believe he much preferred hearing nothing about them. Forcing praise upon a person he considered as unkind, in the truest sense of the word, since where it was not painful, it must be hurtful. By praise, however, I do not mean approbation, which his soul never stinted; in fact he was often

quite enthusiastically carried away by admiration of anything he thought excellent, or containing the merest germ of excellence.

L. H. writes: "The one thing *he could not bear* was any allusion to himself as author of the 'Christian Year.' I have felt quite sorry for people who meant to say a gracious or polite speech upon the subject. On Sunday evening, however, Mrs. Keble almost always ended with the Evening Hymn, after having played sweet soft music most of the evening. Though other tunes of superior merit for this hymn were given to Mrs. Keble, she liked the little German melody which has become so familiar. She had a little German hymn, a kind of metrical version of the *Te Deum*, which seemed to be the original of the tune. It had been sung at the door of a friend by a little German boy, and the notes and words were taken down from his singing and dictation.

"Mr. Keble used to like to be sung to while he read or wrote, except on sermon nights, when he only allowed instrumental music, as the words of the songs distracted him."

A recent criticism (the "Spectator") has complained of there being no mention of the Crimean war in his correspondence. This is only an accident in the selection. Mr. Keble's heart was with our brave army. He did indeed regret that justice required us to support an un-Christian power, but—not only on account of the

personal friends engaged—his thoughts were greatly occupied with it, and he eagerly watched the accounts, and delighted in the heroic acts of courage and endurance. In effect he had a great love and esteem for the soldierly profession. He admired the discipline, and the effect on the character; in fact, he chose as the text to be engraved on a memorial stone to four Otterbourne lads who had died in the course of the war, "It is well for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Then, too, war, in the allegorical aspect, could not fail to win his imagination, as the type of the Church Militant here on earth; and the Christian chivalry of a true "happy warrior" excited and touched his feeling to a great degree. I think he viewed the old war with France as a holy war, and venerated "the Duke" accordingly. I have seen him—once when he heard that one of the great, pure-hearted old soldiers whom he most revered (Lord Seaton, then in his last illness) had enquired for him as "my friend Mr. Keble," —brighten with a sudden gleam of pleasure, and put his hand over his eyes, as he did in moments of thanksgiving. He thoroughly liked an account of a battle, and had a ready insight into the meaning of details one would have thought out of his line.

Indeed, it was curious how every now and then some matter would arise where his exceeding rapidity of comprehension on some newly-presented subject, or ready

application of illustration, would make one say to oneself, as if it were a discovery, "what a wonderfully *clever* man this is;" a thing that his gentle, diffident, humble manner was always making one forget.

Certainly that diffidence took off from the sense of his greatness with some people, as with his own school-children, one of whom exclaimed, "Mr. Keble can't be a great man! Why he did not know how many syllables there were in Balaam;" little knowing that his hesitation was owing to a review of the word in Greek and Hebrew.

Sometimes he would say he had been thinking what a clever person could make of a subject, as, for instance, the three different shapes of the prohibition of smoking in a railway carriage, in English, French, and German. Would that I could recall more of his chance observations.

Two or three times friends at a distance sent enquiries, to which I was to get an answer for them. One was from a lady who had numerous dissenters in her school: "Ask Mr. Keble what he does with unbaptized children." The first answer was playful, "I hope I do not let them fall,"—for happily no child at Hursley of an age to go to school was unchristened; and then ensued the counsel to teach the Creed and Commandments, and if the earlier part of the Catechism were used, to put it, "*When* you are baptized," &c.

Another time, soon after the consecration of Hursley Church, he was to be asked if he would accept a piece of embroidery to be used at the Altar. He then said that he *really did not know* the usages in other Churches, as he always kept himself from observing them, lest his mind should be distracted.

About ten or twelve years ago, a request came for a recommendation of devotions for a non-communicating young girl (unconfirmed, I think) during the celebration. He had none to suggest, and certainly it was to be understood from his words that he did not regard the practice of so remaining as one to be made general, though he instanced special cases in which it might be advisable, such as that of penitents preparing to receive, or a young person in immediate preparation for a First Communion. He also spoke of the difficulties of Fasting Communions, but very tenderly, knowing how great is the difficulty. He decidedly viewed these cases as exceptions.

"Heartsease" was read in manuscript at Hursley, as its predecessor had been. The chief alteration I remember was that a sentence was erased as "coarse," in which Theodora said she really had a heart, though some people thought it was only a machine for pumping blood. Meeting the same expression in another book, recalled to me the scrupulous refinement of Hursley. That conclusion to the story which crept into a sort of

circulation as "Last Heartsease Leaves," was submitted to the same judgment as a part of the book, and this is the reply (the opening words were in Mrs. Keble's hand) :—

"*H. V.*, 11th *May*, /55.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

"I have sent the MRS. off to repose, and here are two lines in her name and mine to say that though the new ending has its amusement and interest, we much prefer the old one, which to me seems *remarkably* felicitous. The new one is liable, I think, to one or two criticisms. There is rather an excess of poetical justice, almost as in a child's book ; and the episode of Lord St. E. and Helen, gathered into so short a space, will to most appear improbable. On the whole, though I am glad to have read or heard it, I think it will be better left out ; any points in it which may have taken hold of your fancy may be inserted here and there as they may seem opportune, but remember you do not rhyme to that dull elf who cannot figure to himself a great many things such as you have there set down. . . . .

"I am always,
My dear child,
Affectionately yours,
J. K."

The last MS. that was submitted to their careful criticism was the prison life of Leonard Ward ; in "the Trial," and this he made me modify a good deal, i.e. the details of the effect in a morbid state of mind, saying that it read almost like a medical book.

The last. It does not seem to be time to speak of the

last, and I turn again to my letters as landmarks of time. There is one that reminds me of his having tried to find some book in which the Roman controversy was put in an easy and sound form. There was some joking between us on the controversy Miss Olivia Primrose had read, being that between Will Atkins and his wife in "Robinson Crusoe," and it ended in my borrowing for him a book containing the curious argument between King Charles I. and the Marquis of Worcester.

He says :—

"*H. V., St. Peter's Day*, 1855.

"MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,

"We shall send K. Charles back to-morrow or next day, with many thanks. It is very interesting, but I own I think the conclusion rather lame and impotent, and I think most people would consider the Marquis as the hero of the Conference.

"I send 4 or 5 copies of our Missionary notice for Wednesday, for those who may be supposed likely to have interest enough in the work to make an offering. . . . .

"Always your Mother's and yours very aff^{ly},
J. K."

This Missionary notice leads me to a very important feature in Mr. Keble's work, i.e. the keen interest he felt and excited in mission work. The young will hardly believe how, in spite of the existence of the S. P. G. and the periodical "Queen's letter" sermons for it, any real active interest in missions to the heathen seemed to be

confined to the Evangelical party; and the tone of semi-dissent, coupled with unrefinement, in which the reports of their doings were given, rendered them distasteful to and distrusted by many. No one seemed to have thought of popularizing interest in the work among the orthodox. I have, however, a printed address to the parishioners of Hursley as early as 1838, in which their Vicar invited them to form an association for subscription to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and from that time forward he was almost yearly bringing some one among them who could speak to them from actual experience.

Those quiet little S. P. G. meetings in the school, how enjoyable they were, how unlike the more formal meetings of great towns. There was the door open to the summer evening air, the people stealing quietly in, boys sleeked down after their work, and little school girls—for there was no collection at the door, that was done by the next Sunday's offertory. Then there was the big map, the stranger who generally felt as if he were treading the Delectable Mountains, and holding converse with the shepherds Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere; there was the grey-headed Shepherd, whom we called our own, almost quivering with reverent feeling for the soldier of his Lord who had toiled and suffered in the outposts of the camp, each refreshed and refreshing in his turn by the meeting.

There was no speechifying for speechifying sake. A few words of introduction would be said by Mr. Keble or by Sir William Heathcote, then came the narrative, as simple and straightforward as might be, sometimes from very fulness of heart shewing a sense of delight in being at Hursley, but with no compliments for form's sake; then thanks, the short prayer, and the moonlit, or mayhap lantern-lit, walk over the shadowed path beneath the park palings back to tea at the Vicarage, and conversation on what had been heard. Those were times of great happiness and hopefulness, never more enjoyed than when Bishop Selwyn or Bishop Grey was the visitor.

Letters from those engaged in such work were about the greatest treat that could be given to Hursley, so that even now the impulse always is to share one with the Vicarage. From various private connections, it happened that the home letters respecting the Auckland, the Kwamagwaza, and the Melanesian missions were frequently there lent, and almost lived in. When very weak and ill, Mrs. Keble wrote, "It makes one feel strong to think of dear Mrs. Robertson," i.e. Henrietta Robertson, since the subject of Miss Mackenzie's memoir, a fragile invalid like herself, but resolute to do and bear. And what alms did not follow those thoughts and prayers that so realized our unity. Before the Church Militant Prayer, in the time of the Maori outbreak,

prayers would be asked for the Church of New Zealand, and again "for the Church of South Africa in her sore distress."

One more series of happy days stands out before me, the commemoration festivals of the consecration. The day itself having been the 28th of October, these had not the outdoor charms of the children's festivals, but they had a brightness of their own. The time was fixed on any day within the Octave, and on the occasion which stands out most prominently in my memory it was the 28th, which brings a peculiarly appropriate collect, as well as some of the Psalms best of all suited to a consecration. On that 28th, the sermon in the morning was preached by the Rev. Robert Speckott Barter, Warden of Winchester College, one of the neighbours and friends whom Mr. Keble most admired and loved, and the first of that happy circle to be taken.

No one who ever saw him can forget the sense of strength and of love that Warden Barter's whole appearance gave. Tall, large, and powerful to an unusual degree, his gentleness and sweetness had for that very reason something peculiar about them; and they were not weakness, for where his sense of right was offended he could be like a lion. There was the same curious sense of unused easy strength about his mind, which gave an unusual sense of repose in talking to him, and above all, his characteristic was throughout his life—

> " Love, the dear delight
> Of hearts that know no guile,
> Who all around see all things bright
> With their own magic smile."

This is a literal description of him. His perfect, entire content and joyfulness were so uniform, that it was almost a joke then, though the recollection brings tears to the eyes now, to hear him say, "'twas the best thing that could happen;" "it couldn't be better." I have even heard him so answer, with a genuine smile of perfect sincerity, of having been laid up with a fit of the gout in a country inn. I cannot help saying all this to shew *what* it was to have him at that anniversary feast, to hear that great powerful voice of his quiver with feeling, as it always did when parts of prayers or lessons touched him, and to hear him preach a sermon of which the 113th Psalm was the text, treating it as the greeting of the pilgrim Israelites to the Levites who sang continually in the temple, and applying it to those whose special service was the constant daily praise of God. It came well from the head of a foundation that "four hundred years and fifty" (and more) previously had been made for that primary object, and from a man who so thoroughly fulfilled it, and the subject spread of course to the universal duty and privilege of glorifying God. The most memorable sentence was one in which he said that our enjoyment of the works of nature was that of children happy and exulting in the beautiful things in their Father's house.

Mr. Keble fully enjoyed that sermon, and on trying to find out how much his village boys had apprehended of it, found they had taken in so much as that it was about "them as sings in the choir." After a full service, as joyful as it could be made, ensued a luncheon-dinner in the vicarage, and then Mr. and Mrs. Keble repaired to the school to entertain at a substantial dinner all the old men and women above sixty. They generally mustered about thirty or thirty-five, including a few whose dinners had to be sent out in basins. There were always more men than women, for Hampshire agriculture and cottage life seems to wear out women much sooner than their husbands, and the white or bald heads always predominated over the close black bonnets on the long benches.

Meantime, if the weather were fine enough, the two upper classes of each school played in the park, and finally came in, and after half-an-hour of singing, had tea and cake and went home. The day closed with Evensong at seven, when Mr. Keble always preached himself. It was one of the times when he always threw off care, and gave himself up to the thankful joy of the anniversary, though always with a sense that there might be a time when, for the sake of the truth of God, such pleasantnesses might have to be given up. He used to speak with great feeling and admiration of the demonstration of those Scottish ministers who left the General

Assembly and became the founders of the Free Kirk, and always expected the day might come for acting "the martyr's sternest part."

That faithlessness which is set against sacramental doctrine, and refuses to live in the unseen, or to accept authority, was the characteristic that grieved him most in the English character; and it was always rest to him to turn from the present to the past. Thus, his work over Bishop Wilson was delightful to him, he hunted up every detail, and to give one instance, was indefatigable in trying to trace out authority for the story of the French ships of war having spared the Isle of Man for the good bishop's sake. He used to say biography was such delightful work, that he wished to make me undertake one, and specified Henry VI. as the subject, the choice being (I fancy) somewhat influenced by Professor Reid's beautiful adoration of "Henry's holy shade" in his Lectures on English History in connection with Shakespeare's Chronicle plays.

How Mr. Keble did enjoy a book that really suited him! It seems to me, that in power of exceeding enjoyment, in positive admiration (which was real thankfulness), he was an unusually happy man; children, high characters, good people, noble actions, fine prints or pictures, music, scenery, all gave him such great delight. The last talk I had with him before his illness began was at a dinner party at Hursley Park, when he was full

of Dr. Pusey's "Daniel," and especially of the nobleness of the character of Nebuchadnezzar, when we come to dwell on him as he is shewn in the book of Scripture.

I see I have said nothing all this time of Miss Keble, and the exceeding charm she imparted to all around by her peculiar "calm and holy quietude." An invalid nearly all her life, and most highly gifted, seclusion gave her a remarkable freshness of appreciation of everything, and there was nothing more delightful than the playful animation with which she would describe the few places or scenes she had visited. There was a kind of Sunday-like placidity about her, best described by the word "recollectedness;" indeed, my mother used to say, that looking at Miss Keble brought back to her memory the many little matters we would carry to Hursley to be discussed, and which were too often forgotten in the eagerness of conversation. We used to ask her the meaning of passages in the "Christian Year," knowing that to her the subject was delightful, while to him it was equally distasteful; and I have in her writing, the explanation of the series of the stained windows at Hursley.

The most notable thing I ever heard her say was in comment on some event where a manifestation of contempt had done some great mischief: "Scorn always seems to me the most dreadful thing," and the gentle face expressed a sort of horror.

She declined gradually through the summer of 1860. My last interview with her was on my return from Dogmersfield, soon after the death of Mr. Dyson, and when she had listened to all the particulars that I had to bring her, she said that she had been thinking "how little change he would need where he was gone." She was the next to follow. One day, early in August, we found Mr. Keble more than usually deaf, and with a certain sort of bewilderment of manner, both sure signs of agitation; we heard that Miss Keble was worse, and a day or two after received the following note:—

"*H. V.*, 8th *Aug.*, /60.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,

"Forgive us for not having remembered to write to you yesterday. Our dear Sister departed like a babe from its mother's arms with hardly a shudder, seemingly in the midst of a sweet sleep which had lasted a great many hours. God be thanked for her, and may He pour His rich blessings on you and all who love her.

"It was at 9.30 yesterday morning; my wife was poorly, but both she and my brother's wife seem comfortably rested to-day.

"In haste and love,
Yours always,
J. K."

The Twenty-third Psalm was sung as she was laid to rest by the church-way path, as it was sung six years later.

"If I was a young man I should be very unhappy

about this," Mr. Keble said of a book shewing the beginning of the defection of a champion of the Church; and certainly the calming power of age did make sorrows, either of the Church or of his home, cut less acutely, though without impairing his alertness of defence.

And by the Church must not be understood simply the Anglican Church, but the Church as the Apostles and Fathers meant when they declared, "I believe .... in the Holy Catholic Church,"—the glorious Bride, the same invisibly in all time, consisting of purified saints above, and struggling saints, repenting sinners, and baptized babes below; and with her purity, spotlessness, and faith; as well as of that generation then living partly in his charge as priest and as Christian, so far as his influence went, in his own sphere and his own branch.

In this was his heart, for this he worked. All religiousness, devotion, goodness, were not isolated matters in his eyes, but the effects of Divine grace, given through the Church; and all learning, all success that came from without, could not but be looked on with suspicion. All that could taint the ancient faith was to be resisted to the uttermost, and the freedom of our branch of the Church, to pronounce her own verdict on false doctrine, to be asserted.

For this was the last outer conflict of his life. The question of the Court of Final Appeal was and is the

question of the Church's power to disown those who teach false doctrine in her name: and Mr. Keble threw himself into the endeavour to find means of freeing her voice.

L. H. says: "Mrs. Keble told me that the thing which tried him most, was the having to go to London to meetings where he was expected to speak. The hurry, heat, and excitement, she said, took more out of him than weeks of his home work." And indeed it seemed to us lookers-on that the journey to London (sixty-five miles by railway, and often back the same day), and the tension of mind that consultations, meetings, and correspondence involved, joined to the increased anxiety for his wife's health, became overmuch, and were probably the immediate cause of the attack of paralysis, which came on while he was writing a letter, about which he was so anxious that the doctors sanctioned his endeavour to unburthen his mind of it by dictating to Mrs. Keble.

That finished, he felt that his work was done, and resigned himself to his rest. In some ways, that last year was a sort of honeymoon to him and his wife; they seemed so peacefully to enjoy the having nothing to be occupied about save the care of one another and the pleasant things that came to them. Let me mention here that the "charming French books" that he speaks of reading at Penzance were the "Diary of Eugénie de Guérin" and the "Memoirs of Madame de Montagu."

From Penzance he came back so much better that Mrs. Keble's first greeting was, "Have you seen the husband? he is a very pretty sight." But, precious as that last summer was, there was little of the old kind of intimate talk on the most deeply interesting subjects. On that first day a lapse into the usual style did harm, and, aware of being an eager talker, I thenceforth shunned any exciting matter. Once, indeed, he looked at some papers I had shewn Mrs. Keble, intended for a book that never came to good, and which he thought tended to that kind of dealing with Scripture which has since been described as landscape Christianity. He spoke of that style having been ascribed to the "Christian Year," I think with a certain amount of regret at having in any way given occasion for it, and warned me against it. Not going into all the reasons of which, I think the chief in his mind were the danger of materialism, of explaining down the supernatural, of trenching on the typical system, and of irreverence in dealing with Scripture characters by free imputation of motives, and drawing them into common life. (N.B. These are only my words, not his.) There was an expression of censure of Rebekah, too, of which he disapproved, as contrary to the reverence which shunned to condemn what God has not condemned. His own pencil-marks carefully noted every little flaw in the proof just as of old.

Then came the last time. Already, before leaving

Honolulu, Queen Emma had expressed her wish to be allowed to visit Hursley, and as soon as she was known to be in England, Mr. Keble wrote to invite her, feeling much as if he were writing to Queen Bertha of Kent. The letter miscarried, and there was a good deal of uncertainty about her movements, so that the time of her coming was only intimated one day before her arrival. Anxious to give no trouble, the Queen came alone to the Vicarage, her attendant gentleman and lady going to the house of a friend in the village, and she herself not even bringing a maid.

Unfortunately, it was impossible that there should not be some preparation, and the day before, while Mrs. Keble was alone, she felt the approach of an attack of spasms, but delayed ringing as long as possible out of consideration for the busy servants, and she was quite disabled on the evening of the Queen's arrival; but her sister took the part of hostess, and the next day she was able to join in a drive through the green beech-woods that are the special charm of Hursley.

We were most kindly asked to join the party at luncheon, but my mother, being afraid that any additional person would add to Mrs. Keble's fatigue, sent me alone; and thus my last sight of my dearest "master" was literally when a queen of the South had come from the utmost parts of the earth to hear his wisdom.

He was very well, more entirely recovered than I had before seen him, sitting at the bottom of the table, carving and talking as nearly as usual as was possible with such a visitor present. After dinner, when Queen Emma had gone to her own room, he much enjoyed hearing from Mr. and Mrs. Huapili some Hawaiian songs, and obtaining much interesting information about the people of the islands. The true account of Captain Cook's death, as known in the islands, had been related by the Queen, and Mrs. Keble had begun to tell it to me, when some interruption occurred, and it was not resumed, though with little thought that these were the last spoken words that would pass between us. The many engagements which over-hurried Queen Emma during those first weeks of her visit to England, obliged her to go away in the afternoon, leaving remembrances very dear to those to whom the extension of the truth was such an object.

It was my farewell, for we were going from home in a few days, and long before our return, that increase of Mrs. Keble's illness had come which took them to Bournemouth, not, however, till Queen Emma had been a second time in the village at Hursley, and Mr. Keble had seen her again. May not the Church of Honolulu be destined for ever to feel his blessing?

In one of his letters in Sir J. T. Coleridge's Memoir, he speaks of the missionary letters handed round among

friends, and compares the custom to the circulating of epistles in the early Church. The chief of these were those of the Rev. R. Robertson, of Kwamagwaza (before mentioned), which were lent by Miss Anne Mackenzie[a], one of the truly congenial spirits, who had been welcomed at the Hursley nest, after her return from her terrible voyage up the fatal Zambesi; and likewise, of far elder interest, those from New Zealand and Melanesia. The last two notes that I ever had from him were called forth by the mislaying of a letter from Bishop Patteson:—

"BOURNEMOUTH,
Holy Innocents, 1865.

"MY DEAR CHILD,

"I am sorry to say that my dearest wife is unable to write you a little Christmas greeting as she had hoped, and as you simply have earned by your better than best behaviour in writing to her so regularly, for which we can never love and thank you enough. I wish I could say that she is at all better, but her breathing and palpitations become, I fear, more and more troublesome, and she suffers much from faintness at night. However, she was yesterday moved into the sitting-room for seven hours, to-day she has not as yet, 4 p.m.

"And now what shall I say, and what will you think, of our

[a] I think Mr. Keble was absent from home and missed seeing Bishop Mackenzie at Winchester; but it was curious that for once Warden Barter was not sanguine as to that mission; "This is a sorrowful meeting," he said, "I look on that man as doomed;" and then he spoke of the climate and the uncertainty of the state of the country.

not returning that noble letter from Melanesia which you enclosed to us, and which, as you expected, came the same day with a most precious one to me. Alas! we have searched up and down and have not been able to find either since Sunday evening last. I am sadly afraid the irreparable loss is owing to some shocking carelessness of mine, for our young ladies say they were last seen in my possession. So, I fear, I must go on with a remorseful heart, bearing the blame of both the misplaces. I wish it were not a sample of the matters mostly laid up in my memory. C. is still sanguine as to the letters turning up, but I dare not be. Many thanks for the comfortable account of your little niece Margaret, her mother and all; and I must add my special thanks for the new series of 'Good Women,' the nicest new book I have seen since 'Golden Deeds.' I believe we are going to send for our Martha to help Anne to nurse, and I have not much time to write this letter, so I must make an end, with a most hearty and loving Christmas greeting to you both and all.

"Your most affte,
J. K."

"B.MOUTH,
29th Dec., 1865.

"MY VERY DEAR CHILD,

"This comes first to say that, to my very great relief, I found this morning the two letters in a drawer in which I myself had specially lodged them for safe keeping, and herewith they come, saving something to myself which he would not perhaps like to have shewn. How precious it all is, and what thoughts it brings over one (among others) of one's own ways..... We wish your dear mother, and

the two households with their belongings, a happy new year and many of them.

"Yours very affᵗˡʸ,
J. K."

There can be little more to say. The account of the sudden collapse of the strength, under protracted anxiety and the continual sight of suffering, has been elsewhere given. The two lives were bound up in one another, and each fresh loosening of the silver cord in the one seemed to destroy something in the other. Everyone, Mrs. Keble herself included, thought that she would be laid in the grave that was made ready at the same time; but it was the will of God that she should be patiently waiting her forty days, while we, at seven in the morning, met his mortal remains in his church of All Saints, and went up to the chancel where he was placed.

The greeting sentences were said when this entrance into the church took place. Afterwards, at eleven o'clock, it being Wednesday, we had Matins and Litany, and, assuredly, mourners little know the comfort and soothing of thus preparing the mind for the actual Burial Service by the calm recurrence to the Church's regular course. Those 8th day of the month Psalms were specially comforting.

It was the one bright beautiful day of a cold wet spring, and the celandines spread and glistened like stars round the grave, where we laid him, and bade him

our last "God be with you," with the 23rd Psalm, and went home, hoping that he would not blame us for irreverence for thinking of him in words applied to the first Saint who bore his name—"He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."

RECOLLECTIONS OF HURSLEY VICARAGE.

By FRANCES M. WILBRAHAM.

"He who hath found a fledged bird's nest, can tell
At first sight that the bird is flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown."—*Vaughan.*

My dear Friend,

You express a wish for some more detailed and connected account than we have hitherto given you of our visits to Hursley Vicarage, and of its late beloved inhabitants. It will be a real refreshment to endeavour to gratify the wish, for I reckon it one of the tenderest amongst the many tender mercies which have brightened my life, that for thirteen years that dear spot was open to me, becoming more and more home-like each time that I visited it. What a treasury of "sad sweet memories" have those visits, and the frequent letters which bridged over the intervals between them, stored up, memories fraught with comfort and hope, and supplying strong incentives to the practice of all that is pure, lovely, and of good report. Would that I had the power of setting them vividly before you!

It was in the autumn of 1852 that I first saw Win-

chester, the grand old town, whose cathedral and grey walls carry one back in thought far beyond the Norman Conquest. The friends who welcomed us under William of Wykeham's College roof had been for many years on terms of affectionate intimacy with Mr. and Mrs. Keble; and, before a week had passed, they proposed that we should accompany them to Hursley, one calm warm October forenoon, and stay for Evensong at four o'clock.

Some of us drove there, some walked. I was of the latter faction, and much enjoyed crossing the undulating chalky downs, with their round green heads, here and there scarred with dazzling white, and topped with yew-trees in single file that shewed dark and ragged against the sky. After a walk of some miles, which a soft pure breeze rendered less fatiguing than it must otherwise have been, my brother and I came rather suddenly upon woodland scenery, and followed a narrow lane, rich with masses of downy white wild clematis, till it led us down into the Romsey road. I remember noticing near this lane a draw-well, with a picturesque pent-house roof sheltering it. Straggling houses, all neat and cared for, now betokened the nearness of Hursley village, and also of a manorial residence. In fact, Hursley Park skirted our road, a rising ground clothed with trees, either in masses of rich antumnal colouring, or standing single like golden lamps, their foliage full, though discoloured.

Soon the church met our eyes, half-hidden by tall lime-trees, but we turned through the Vicarage gate, leaving the village school-house and play-ground to our left. It so happened that the little girls were at play, some singing, others dancing in a ring; all paused and curtseyed to us as we passed. At once that description in the *Lyra Innocentium* flashed across my mind, of village maidens making

> "Their obeisance low,
> As forest blue-bells in a row
> Stoop to the first May wind, sweeping o'er each in turn."

The Vicarage porch looks north, and is covered, or rather loaded, with ivy, which climbs up to the roof of the house. Here Mr. Keble greeted us, emerging from his little study, the door of which, as I afterwards noticed, oftener than not, stood open. It gave one a thrill to be thus brought into contact with the author of the "Christian Year," the man who, more than any other living person, had moulded one's thoughts, defined one's Church-principles, sobered yet deepened one's feelings on the most momentous of subjects. Was it really he, the helper and guide of thousands, who now received us with such unaffected kindness, led us to the sunny room, half library half drawing-room, where Mrs. Keble was, and invited us to rest after our four miles' walk? His features, indeed, were familiar to us, as to most people, from the engraving of Richmond's first portrait

of him, taken in middle life for Sir John Coleridge. Now the original stood before me, and I saw at a glance that face and figure had been faithfully portrayed. The forehead was pale and serene, the hair silvery; doubtless this token of advancing years must have helped to give softness and refinement to the features; eyebrows sprinkled with white shaded eyes of singular brilliancy and depth of expression, as ready (I afterwards well knew) to light up with mirth and mischief while playful talk was going on, as they were to melt into mournful earnestness when graver topics were broached. He habitually wore glasses, but used often to take them off and hold them in his hand when conversing with animation. An old and dear friend of his has told me that he "looked almost boyish till about fifty, and after that rapidly aged in outward appearance." At this time he was in his sixty-first year, healthy and strong, and active. Often since have we been privileged to accompany him in his parish walks; and even when close upon seventy, we have seen him scramble up and down steep banks and hill sides with ease. In appearance he was quite one's ideal of an old-fashioned country clergyman, but of one whose Oxford days were fresh in his mind; there was a touch of *vieille cour* in his manner, which added, I think, to its charm. His voice in speaking was rather low, and especially so when the subject of conversation was very near his

heart. It often struck me, when listening to him, that without the slightest effort or aim at effect, he always hit upon the most suitable and telling words (and the shortest) in which to clothe his ideas. This unconscious beauty of language, coupled with the originality and wisdom of the ideas themselves, riveted them in one's memory; the look, too, with which they were uttered, could not be forgotten, and rises as vividly before my mind's eye "through the golden mist of years" as though it belonged to the present, instead of the "long ago."

But these are impressions left by many days of happy intercourse. We must return to that first meeting, and to that drawing-room, and to Mrs. Keble, its sweet presiding genius. Two windows, one looking east, the other south, one framed with jessamine, the other (at that time) with yellow and white Banksia rose-trees, lighted this room. The former looked out on the old church tower and its newly added taper spire, only divided from the Vicarage by a terrace, a garden-plot, very bright and trimly kept, and a line of tall bushes. A few flower-beds, and a gravel walk leading down a slope to the churchyard; beyond that a paddock shut in by trees, "faded yet full," were the objects visible from the south window. It was a completely *homey* view, suited to the spot which one, who afterwards rested there a day or two, after hard work and conflict at the Antipodes, designated "a paradise of peace and

tranquillity." It made me think of a lark's nest, so sheltered and warm, greenery all round, and blue sky overhead. It had not the charm of hazy distances and far-away hills; but these, with sea and island and indented shore, were visible from several points in the parish, so Mr. Keble had not far to seek for most of the word-landscapes which his poems contain. It is not often that such Arcadian scenes present themselves to us, dwellers north of Trent, hemmed in, as we increasingly are, by coal, or iron, or manufacturing districts; so we enjoyed their quiet beauty to the utmost.

I well remember how fully Mrs. Keble seemed to enter into our enjoyment. Dear Mrs. Keble, the acquaintance of an hour then, the truest, wisest, most revered friend afterwards! I would not, if I could, attempt, even to you, to describe such an one; it is enough to say that her graceful, fragile, yet dignified figure, those delicate features, varying in colour and expression, and that sweet low voice, more than realized my ideal of the exterior of a poet's wife; there was nothing in her surroundings to jar with this first impression. Her dress (then and always) seemed to me peculiarly resting to the eye by its soft colouring and texture. On the open pianoforte lay an inviting selection of music, much of it Mendelssohn's; and, in after days, I frequently heard her play, not indeed brilliantly, but

with a delicate touch and intense delight in good music, especially sacred. Her pencil drawings were singularly effective; one of them you will remember, a copy of Raphael's two adoring angels in the Madonna del Sisto, done by her in early life, and by her expressed desire sent to me after her death; the attitudes of both angels, and the rapt expression of the up-turned faces, are admirably rendered, evidently done *con amore.*

How smoothly that day glided by! not so rapidly as days marked in white usually do, from the very depth of the interest stamped on its sayings and doings. Some cheerful talk, kindly and sparkling, occupied the first hour; then dinner, "the great event of the day, after all," as our host playfully said.

The afternoon was spent with Mrs. Keble out of doors. We drove through the Park to Merdon Castle, or rather to the spot where its foundations and a crumbling remnant of old tower and wall still remain, witnesses to its former grandeur and strength. We wandered long among the swelling turf-covered mounds, dotted with stunted yews, from which an expanse of wooded park was visible. After a while Mr. Keble appeared, accompanied by my brother, and he took us down to see the old well which supplied the castle with water in its various sieges. We talked of the old days of King Stephen, whose brother, Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, built this castle, with five others, now

all demolished. It was hard to realize that round this solitary place then raged the most savage, desolating warfare England ever experienced—a warfare of which the chronicler says that they who witnessed its miseries used to cry out that "Christ had forgotten them." The well, we were told, is three hundred feet deep, and the little stones we threw down it confirmed the statement, by the length of time they took in reaching the bottom. Mrs. Keble said that when last it was cleaned a vast number of pins, thrown down by curious visitors, by way of sounding its depth, were found embedded in the mud. A black leather water-jack, also, of the antique form now only seen in heraldry, had been discovered in it.—We turned back to the Vicarage, after casting one more look towards the russet-coloured Hursley woods. "Some day," said Mr. Keble, "I should like to shew you my cathedral; it is over *there*." I had the happiness of visiting this cathedral with him afterwards; it was a fine wood of beech-trees, tall and regular in their growth, and arching over head somewhat like a groined and vaulted roof. What a quick eye he had for anything, great or small, of natural beauty! a thorn-tree, covered with green mistletoe, another tree, leafless and blighted, but clothed with a lichen that looked like frosted silver—nothing was lost upon him. He described picturesquely the having witnessed the sudden, spontaneous fall of a tree crowned

with foliage, and seemingly full of life, but which must have had decay at its core for years past.

The church bell called us to Evensong, and we took our places with Mrs. Keble in the tower, the only part of the old structure which had not been pulled down or cased with new stone-work. It was of grey stone, with many large pebbles imbedded in it. Within were some monumental tablets which had been removed from the body of the church; one was to the memory of several members of the Cromwell family, Richard Cromwell having lived at Hursley after his abdication, and been buried here. The body of the church, which was brick, is replaced by one of stone, with a broad open-seated nave, and side aisles. When first we saw it, all the windows were of stained glass, and formed a regular series of subjects from Old and New Testament history, in imitation of the magnificent Belgian glass in the church of Mr. Keble's dear native Fairford. This amount of coloured window rendered Hursley Church very dark, an inconvenience afterwards remedied by piercing dormer windows in the high-pitched roof. However, in the fading light, it looked very solemn; the east window exactly opposite to us represented the Crucifixion, and I cannot forget how deeply that central Figure impressed me, the drooping Head and out-stretched Arms seen in dim outline against the pale sky. The congregation was small; a few women,

two or three old men in linen frocks, a couple of blind paupers led in from the poor-house near at hand, a sprinkling of gentlefolks resident in or near the pleasant village, seemed to compose it. Mr. Keble and his then curate and dear friend, Mr. Peter Young, shared the service, the former reading the Lessons. Some choir-boys sang, or more properly attempted, the Canticles to a rather difficult Gregorian. At the church door we took our leave, and returned home in the dusky twilight.

In 1853, Mr. Keble was already at work on his "Life of Bishop Wilson," though it did not see the light till ten years later. He often said that it was a great solace to him to be thus led to contemplate that saintly character so closely. He enjoyed, too, re-editing his works, and rescuing them from the miserable garbling they underwent during the last century. The Bishop, as you know, was a Cestrian, born at Burton, a village situated on the estuary of the Dee. During a sea-residence of some weeks in that neighbourhood, I employed myself in taking sketches, more accurate than artistic, of the cottage where he was born, and the school and church which he built. I made acquaintance, too, with an aged spinster named Pickance, the lineal descendant of the Bishop's steward, and from her gleaned some traditions of his childhood and boyhood, which seemed

worthy of his biographer's notice. Mrs. Keble thus writes about them: "Mr. Keble is, I assure you, as much pleased with the pictures, as you in your kindness could have wished him to be. The sketch of the school is so pretty, as well as interesting, and quite agrees with our recollections of it. He thanks you much for taking pains to get information for him. He has an insatiable thirst for every little particular which can be at all satisfactorily made out. The anecdote about the dog[a] was quite a prize in this way. If it is true that the 'boy is father to the man,' one may plainly trace the relationship in this trait; and it is very interesting to think of the child's care for his charge, so like the bishop's for *his*: I think you will most likely see it figure in 'the Life' if the present writer is allowed to complete it. He has been very busy lately with the Confirmation work, trying to get the young people as well prepared as he could before the harvest-work begins, when it is difficult to get hold of them. This has interrupted his writing a good deal, and I suppose he will hardly be able to throw himself into it again with the same energy as before, until after the Confirmation. He finds it so absorbing when he is fairly at work on the bishop, that he cannot easily lay it aside, but for this very reason I'm afraid the public will still have some time to wait."

[a] Bishop Wilson, when a little child, had a favourite dog, and shewed much distress because the animal might not go to church with him on Sundays.

On St. Peter's Day, 1854, we returned to Hursley; in my diary, I find the visit thus briefly noticed: "Drove to the Vicarage with Dr. M——, reached it just as they were going into church; Mr. Keble officiated single-handed; we lingered afterwards in the garden with Mrs. Keble; *he* soon joined us, and asked eagerly for the latest tidings from Varna. He looked worn and pre-occupied, and soon carried off Dr. M—— to the straight walk skirting the churchyard, where they paced to and fro, in deep discussion. It was the Oxford University Reform Bill, then pending, which caused him such painful anxiety."

Mr. Keble had been suffering of late from a pain and weakness in his right wrist, which had threatened to disable him from writing. This privation he was mercifully spared; and he spoke very thankfully of its removal. Often since that time have I seen him seated at the round table in the drawing-room, calmly writing in that small, rather rounded, legible hand of his, quite undisturbed by our talk, music, or reading aloud.

This power of abstracting himself (he used to say) he owed to early training. He had, as you know, been educated with his brother and sisters at home; and their father, he said, had used them so to concentrate their attention, each on his or her own lesson, as to be almost unaware of the buzz of voices around them. One word more (after this digression) respecting Mr. Keble's

experience of pain; possibly, even his earnest and ready sympathy may have been deepened by it; for he certainly was specially compassionate towards sick and suffering people. I have seen him quite overcome, and unable to restrain his tears, after ministering at the bedside of a young parishioner afflicted with disease in the hip-joint. Towards the old and the poor he was tenderly thoughtful; often, on his return from his parochial rounds, he used to describe minutely to Mrs. Keble the aches and pains of some infirm cottager, and consult with her how best to relieve them; and her practical suggestions and aid were ever at his service.

A real sorrow to Mr. Keble, at this time, was the war just breaking out in the East. It grieved him sorely that England should have been compelled to league herself with a Mahometan power against another Christian nation. He had a great love for the Greek Church, and could not bear that her sons should come into conflict with those of our own communion. Of course, I am not pretending to say what his political views on the subject of the war were, but as a Christian, it was very repugnant to his feelings. Yet the individual acts of heroism (often Christian heroism) which that war gave birth to, and the wonderful endurance shewn during the course of it by our officers and men, kindled his highest enthusiasm. A really soldierly spirit had great charms for him; "as for the siege and the war (he wrote a little

later) I will not talk about it, for I really have nothing to remark about it, and my mere feelings would do nobody any good. Only I will say that it seems to me to have brought out the United Services better . . . . . than anything that has occurred in my time." Again he writes, "I return the good Colonel's letter, with many thanks for our being allowed to read it; I wish it were as hopeful in regard to our prospects, as it is sweet and instructive in regard to the writer."

On the day of this our second visit to Hursley, to which I must now revert, mention was made of the capture of an English vessel, the "Tiger," by the Russians, and of the detention of her officers at Moscow. "I always heard," said Mr. Keble, with a half smile, "that the Russians were a cruel people, but never imagined such a refinement of torture as sending *middies* to the University of Moscow to study!"

The conversation presently turned upon parish topics, and on a reading-room (which he took us to see) lately fitted up under his eye for the use of farmers' sons and other young men in the winter evenings. Chess-boards, draft-boards, a good fire, coffee, I believe, and a good set of books, had been selected to make it attractive. Amongst the works of fiction were some of Scott's novels, and Mr. Keble, himself a great admirer of Scott, had been troubled that morning by a parishioner's remarks on some of the scenes in "Old Mortality." The

good man, he said, had been grievously scandalized by the Scripture quotations put into the mouths of some of the Covenanters, old "Mause," especially. He could not be made to see that such descriptions were meant to illustrate the spirit of that age and country; to him they seemed pure irreverence; and Mr. Keble was minded to withdraw the work at once, lest it should shock or blunt the religious feelings of rustic readers.

A few days later, we met Mr. and Mrs. Keble at a christening, the occasion of all others most festive in their eyes. You cannot fail to have gathered from much of Mr. Keble's poetry, how deeply the love of children and of young people was rooted in his nature. Mrs. Keble, perhaps, loved them equally, not merely in the superficial way in which many people caress and notice an engaging child, but with a watchful, painstaking, discriminating love, which soon gained both their affection and obedience. She had, as you know, no children of her own, but little nephews, nieces, and cousins, often stayed at the Vicarage. It was there that the incident occurred so touchingly told in the *Lyra Innocentium*, under the title of "Loneliness," and it was Mrs. Keble herself who offered to soothe the tremors of the little guest by reading aloud, and was begged by him to "read something *true*." She had a store of playthings, pictures, and childish ballads set to music, for the little ones; and croquet for their elders on a square of green lawn,

necessarily so narrow in its limits that the game was played under difficulties, and balls would roll away into the adjacent verbena or nemophila beds. "Children's sports" and "children's troubles" were studies of deep interest to her and Mr. Keble; they shewed an almost parental regard for their godchildren, looking upon the tie as lifelong, not, as so many think, dissolved at confirmation. On the occasion of this christening they were doubly interested, having stood sponsors to two of the older children, who were both present. The gathering took place at Winchester, on a sultry July day. There had been drenching thunder-showers all the morning, but clear shining after rain had followed, and now lighted up trees, and red-tiled roofs, and the grey length of the cathedral. The guests assembled, those from Hursley Vicarage amongst them. I saw Mr. Keble's face assume a careworn expression, as he talked with one of the sponsors, who was fresh from town, and had sat up till half-past three that morning, listening to a debate in the House of Lords on the University Reform Bill. It did not seem to be progressing favourably, and the lukewarmness of one or two, in whose championship Mr. Keble put faith, was a chilling disappointment to him.

We walked to the College Chapel, each child of the family under the wing of one or more of his or her sponsors. In the porch Mr. Keble was beckoned away, the

grand old Warden having expressed a desire that he should officiate at the christening, in his room. "It will make the event historical," he said afterwards. After a little friendly contest, Mr. Keble yielded, and soon returned surpliced, and took his place before the font. It was beautifully decked with roses brought from Hursley parish, in all stages, from the early bud to the expanded flower. You can fancy nothing more fresh and fragrant than this garland, each leaf and petal glistering with rain-drops. My journal, written a few hours later, says: "The service was most impressive; in those parts which immediately concern the sponsors, Mr. Keble turned and addressed us so personally, with such an earnest look and distinct voice, as carried the words straight home. After signing the little one with the sign of the cross, he seemed loth to part with him, and there was a pause of a minute or two, before he replaced him in my arms." On our return home Mr. Keble drew near and stooped to kiss the forehead still "glistening with baptismal dew:" then he spoke simply but earnestly in an undertone of the grace given in baptism, and he said that, to his mind, the water, the outward sign of that grace, ought to be shed as freely as prudence would permit over the infant, and the little head always bared to receive it. Then he commented with amused interest on the indifference of the newborn child to a silver-gilt cup (a godfather's gift), with which some of

the elder ones tried to catch and dazzle his eye. He took up, and narrowly examined, an "Apostle spoon" of antique design, of which the handle was a robed figure holding an anchor. This led his thoughts, by a natural transition, to the Church's work in New Zealand, respecting which he had gleaned many particulars from the Bishop and Mrs. Selwyn, in their short visit to Hursley three weeks before. Some of these he retailed with keen interest; and I remember how he afterwards rehearsed, with animated tones and gestures, a little scene on board the vessel which brought them home, the adieux between their younger son and his nurse, and how "Johnnie" had called out words of farewell and consolation to her while climbing the mast, and "getting higher and higher amongst the rigging."

An allusion to a private letter from Turkey, written on a reconnoitring expedition within hearing of the cannon of Silistria, now changed the subject, and conjectures were hazarded as to the probable scene of the struggle with Russia, then a subject of anxious surmise. A few words which dropped from Mr. Keble, respecting the "mercy" and the guidance which could bring light out of this perilous and dim uncertainty, were very comforting.

We all repaired to the chapel for Evensong, and then dispersed. To the parents of the newly-baptized one, Mr. Keble's parting expression of feeling was, "Thanks,

thanks for this kindness;" and to the sponsors he said, with an earnest pressure of the hand, "We belong to the same corps now, do not we?" The doings and sayings of that day seemed to furnish a practical illustration of many exquisite passages in the *Lyra Innocentium.*

Late in August, 1855, Mr. Keble says, in a letter to my brother in the Crimea, "I cannot say that my wife has returned to her strength, though the worst pain of her tic (which has tried her a great deal this spring and summer) has happily gone by; but she is as 'weak as water,' and in two or three days' time I hope to take her to the sea, perhaps at Hastings, for a short time—what next after I know not. It has been a good summer to stay at home, most beautiful foliage and flowers, and now the harvest is approaching, late, but with good promise, if the rains of last week have not too much beaten it down; I am sorry, though, to hear some little whisper of blight." . . . . . Respecting Church matters he writes sadly: "As for our Sebastopol (Venerable City), it is, to my thinking, more closely beset than ever by the united forces of the Latins, Ultra-Protestants, Infidels. . . . . The best symptom about it seems the increasing amount of work done by the clergy in their parishes; the worst, the undeniable prevalence of Germanism, &c., at Oxford. The only thing for it is to *live* on from day to day (would that one *worked* on also)

hoping the best and expecting the worst." "This last week (he adds) I have been to a consecration of a church at Sir G. Prevost's place in Gloucestershire, and a most beautiful sight to me it was—on the slope of Stinchcombe Hill, with noble trees around it, and glimpses of the Severn, and a very pretty country between them; two bishops and seventy or eighty clergy in their surplices, and a very good musical service, got up entirely there and in one or two villages at hand; the Bishop of Oxford preaching, and an offertory of £235 for a church beautifully restored and enlarged."

Then follows the account of a parochial meeting, such as Mr. Keble specially enjoyed. "We have had a Cape-town, or rather Grahamstown, gathering in our school-room, and a Mr. Fleming, once an army chaplain, came and told us some things about the Kafirs which surprised me. One was that they were (not surmised, but) ascertained to be descendants of Abraham by Ishmael. We have also had the W——s, whom you ought to know, giving what I call fearful accounts of the mighty absorbing work which seems to be going on in Rome, and how the converts, at least such as W. P——, if they will *but be* converts, are allowed to retain what intellectual scruples they please; and to tell everybody so—at least, that is what *he* does. What can be the issue of such a system?" After alluding to the recent death of Dr. Pusey's elder brother at Christ Church, and the

alarming illness of Mr. Marriott, he concludes with a remark one can scarcely endorse: "What a gossiping unsubstantial letter this is; I should hardly have troubled you with it had I known what it would turn out to be when I began."

I must now try and set before you another member of the Keble family, the sister Elisabeth[b], whose life was divided between Bisley and Hursley Vicarages. It was in the summer of 1856 that E—— and I met her for the first time under her poet-brother's roof. I like to look back on those first days of peaceful intercourse, and the gradual melting away of the reserve, most sweet and gentle in its character, which wrapped her round at first. We had previously heard much of her, as being a great sufferer, and a most patient one; we had heard, too, that from being educated with her brothers, and possessing great natural abilities, she was not far behind them in acquirements, so you may imagine we looked with reverence at the fragile looking person whom Mrs. Keble led us up to on our first arrival. "La souffrance a passé par là," was my first thought as I glanced at the delicate blanched face; my next and abiding thought was, "and surely patience has had her perfect work there." There was a certain degree of likeness between the features of the sister and brother, the same

[b] Miss Keble always spelt her name in the Scripture fashion.

soft brightness in the eyes. There was a peculiar stillness and quietness about dear Miss Keble. She told us one day, that probably from that cause, animals and birds seemed to lose all fear of her. One day, sitting on the lawn at Fairford, she espied a nest with four unfledged nestlings in it, which had been blown down from a neighbouring tree; a friend who was with her picked it up and set it on her knee, then went to fetch the gardener that he might replace it on its bough. No sooner was Miss Keble alone, than the parent birds, which had been hovering round, took heart of grace, and actually brought food to their young ones, alighting on her knee to feed them, flying off again, and returning regularly and frequently with a fresh store. She observed (by the way) that while they fed three of the callow creatures in regular order, they invariably omitted to feed the fourth! Another day, when she was sitting out of doors, a wren was attracted by a pattern of small berries on her muslin gown. It pecked at them, and seemingly disappointed in its hope of something good to eat, it made its way under the muslin flounce, and pecked at the tantalizing berries from within. Miss Keble was, in her quiet way, as great an admirer, or rather lover of nature, as her brother. Ill health sadly limited her enjoyments in this respect; but I have seen her sitting at the window for long together, enjoying the sight of the fleecy clouds sailing across a tender blue

sky, and forming a background to the beautiful spire of the church. I remember her delight in the clusters of straw-coloured Banksia roses, that peeped in at her pleasant white-curtained bed-room window, and her gentle invitation to come in and enjoy them. One great link between us all was my acquaintance with their native haunts. I had spent many weeks near Cirencester with friends who were devoted to church architecture, and we had visited together most of the noteworthy churches thereabouts—glorious Fairford especially, Bisley, Coln St. Alwyn, and Maysey-Hampton, with its old Rectory, the frequent resting-place of Richard Hooker—the residence in early life of Mrs. Keble and her Bisley sister. These and other homes of their family, we used often to talk of; and though Mr. Keble would shake his head and exclaim, "Ah, there, you people are off to Gloucestershire again!" yet he often lingered near, and joined in the conversation. I remember an amusing debate *which* ranked lowest in the scale of intellect, the "Modern Bœotians" as we Cestrians have been styled, or the famous "moon-rakers" of Gloucestershire. Miss Keble, when tolerably well, entered into these discussions with much quiet fun.

Miss Keble's love of Dante furnished another subject of mutual interest. We had just returned from Evening Service at seven, and were sitting together in the fading light, when it chanced that some quotation

was made from that wonderful poet; Mrs. Keble at once brought us a copy of the *Divina Commedia*, then a second copy for Miss Keble's use; and we spent a happy evening in reading two or three very favourite, and not very difficult, cantos of the *Paradiso;* Mr. Keble standing by, with his Latin Dictionary in his hand, to which he often referred, would not suffer a word or a phrase to pass without fathoming its meaning. The sublime scene (Cantos 24—26), in which Dante is interrogated by the three chief Apostles, concerning his faith, hope, and love, impressed him much. So, at another time, did Dante's fearless invectives against the wickedness of several popes. He examined, with interest, some passages relating to the blessed Virgin, in order to ascertain Dante's theological views respecting her. The hours spent then and afterwards, in carefully studying those last cantos of the *Paradiso*, and also some exquisite passages in the opening of the *Purgatorio*, were supremely delightful.

Miss Keble's presence gave a completeness to the Hursley Sunday, bright and refreshing as that day always was in that house. She would make her entrance after we were seated at the eight-o'clock breakfast-table, her brother always rising to meet her with a sort of reverential tenderness. It was beautiful to see their devotion to one another; and Mrs. Keble's to them both. Conversation seemed naturally to flow into chan-

nels suited to the day; not unfrequently, it turned upon one or other of the Old Testament characters: on Saul, the bright promise of whose youth was so mournfully quenched in later life; or Esau, whose profaneness of heart, Mr. Keble said, we were apt to overlook, dazzled by a sort of reckless generosity which, to shallow minds, rendered him more loveable than his twin brother. The friendship of David and Jonathan, and the sins and sorrows, as well as the virtues, of King David, were such living realities to Mr. Keble, that he almost broke down when alluding to them. We remember his observing, that David's crime was probably kept from the knowledge of all, except Joab, until it was recorded in the Bible—a view of the matter which was new to us. We remember, too, his quoting a rule among the early Fathers, not to allow themselves to pass judgment on Scripture personages. He dwelt on the sweetness of Ruth's character and history; but pointed out, as one of the infinite condescensions of our blessed Lord, that He should have numbered amongst His ancestors *her*, who was a Moabitess, and Rahab, one of the doomed race of Canaan.

After breakfast, we helped Mrs. Keble in her Sunday-school, under the green lime-trees; then adjourned to church, where Miss Keble was already established. It was the Sunday on which a thanksgiving for peace with Russia was to be offered up throughout the land; and

you may be sure no one rejoiced in it more (or sympathized more in our private causes for deep gratitude) than Mr. Keble. There was a good congregation; the men, many of them in linen frocks, sitting on one side of the nave, the women on the other. Mr. Keble preached on Colossians iii.; and after touching upon the blessings of earthly peace, he went on to speak of the peace of God, founded on love to Him, and to our neighbour for His sake. He bade us, in his simple pithy way, not merely cherish peace as a feeling, but cultivate it as a duty. He pointed out the prayers for it both in our Morning and Evening Service, as for a thing indispensable for our well-being. It must "*rule* in our hearts, governing each thought, word, and act; it must keep us in the communion of the Church, for we are called to it, not as individuals only, but 'in one body;' and, possessing it, we shall be 'thankful.' Amid all our cheerful conversation, nay, our mirth, we must be sure we keep deep down in our hearts a flow of serious earnest thought." These were some of his words. How completely he acted upon this principle, what still pure depths lay beneath the bright ripple of his playful wit, those who knew him best could best tell.

On this very subject of peace, I remember his owning that there was truth in the passage from "Maud," beginning, "Why do they prate of the blessings of peace?" and he added, with a smile, that under his own eye, two

rough ne'er-do-well young men, "regular cubs," had enlisted, and returned from Sebastopol greatly improved by hardship and discipline.

In the afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Keble each went to the Sunday-school. He invited me, I recollect, to come and take a class for him: "Ladies' teaching was often most effective with boys; it roused the dormant chivalry in them." However, it ended by our both helping Mrs. Keble, who even then often overtasked her strength in her efforts to do good. She made over to us a nice intelligent set of first-class girls, many of whom had, at her suggestion, learnt by heart a surprising number of Psalms. These, she hoped, would be a safeguard to them in after life. By her desire, we read to them a "Sunday story" after the graver teaching was over: in another Sunday-school, in Hursley parish, the presiding lady made her older scholars write *résumés* of Scripture history in the afternoons, to their great enjoyment as well as profit. We thankfully adopted this plan in our Cheshire school, as a help and variety, and a preventive against the dulness which Sunday teaching is often accused of. The Hampshire accent sounded almost "mincing" in our ears, accustomed to the broad dialect of the North-western counties. Mr. Keble took much interest in these differences of dialect; and half envied us, I think, some of our Saxon words,

such as *fremd* for "stranger," *leer* for "empty," or *th'onder* for "the sunset."

After evening church, followed the sweet restful lingering about the garden, the cheerful tea-table, the spell of Dante, then reading or talk, as inclination might prompt, till bed-time. Bishop Wilson's well-known Form was used when the little household assembled for evening prayers; and after it some short petitions, for the sick of the parish, for those distressed in mind, for the Church under her present troubles, &c. Then Mrs. Keble expressed a wish that "Sun of my soul" should be sung; and we joined in the "dear familiar strain" as best we could; Mr. Keble, meanwhile, quietly reading his book apart.

I often wondered, and longed to know, what his precise feeling was towards the "Christian Year," and whether its words gave *him* any portion of the comfort they have conveyed to thousands. But he never volunteered any mention of the book; and with all his wonderful child-like humility, there was a something about him which quite forbade one's pressing upon him any topic to which he did not readily respond. Whatever his feeling respecting the book may have been during his lifetime, may we not humbly believe that it will prove to him a crown of rejoicing at the last day?

Mr. Keble delighted in the poem on "Sunday," writ-

ten by Archdeacon Freeman. One day he said to me, "Many people give *me* the credit of having written those verses; I wish I had, for they are excellent!"

Certainly, the Sundays at his vicarage shadowed forth the "faultless charities above," as clearly as one can ever expect to see them on earth.

It was the morning after that "Peace Sunday," (which was also Trinity Sunday,) that we attended early prayers as usual, and afterwards went round the church with the Vicar as our cicerone. We began with the baptistery, its "penitential window," and the font, with its rich canopy, an anonymous gift. Then he pointed out the connected series of Scripture subjects in the windows; and spoke much of those surpassingly beautiful ones[c], captured at sea by the Bristol merchant (or pirate) Tame, in the sixteenth century, and placed in a church built expressly for them at Fairford.

Many scenes and characters in Holy Writ had been stamped on Mr. Keble's childish memories by those glowing gem-like panes; and he said that he wished his juvenile parishioners to have something of the same training. Some of his windows, however, had disappointed him, and he hoped to have them altered by-and-by. He pointed out the "rose and pomegranate[d]" on either side of the cross in the east window—emblems,

[c] Said to have been designed by Albert Durer.

[d] Not in the present glass.

he had been told, of the blessed Virgin and of St. John. He looked lovingly at the delicate stone carvings in the chancel; the capitals of the pillars enriched with oak and maple leaves, and ivy, and birds, (the swallow and sparrow of the eighty-fourth Psalm,) and, if I remember right, butterflies*.

Mr. Keble spoke in a low voice of the suitableness of flowers for marking the various holy-days of the Church: then he spoke of the holy-days themselves. One of us alluded to Easter Eve as her "favourite day in the whole year, though a Fast." "I love that day best, too," Mr. Keble answered; then after a pause, he added, with indescribable sweetness of look and tone, "perhaps *because* it is a fast: the days of humiliation seem to suit one best, as long as one is here." On the encaustic tiles, which formed the risers of the chancel steps, were printed several of the Beatitudes. There was depth and meaning in all the details of the church.

Mr. Keble had now a pastoral visit to pay at a neighbouring farm; and we followed him thither by appointment, and waited below-stairs, chatting with the housewife, who apologized needlessly for her tidy kitchen being "all of a caddle." By-and-by he came down, and we accompanied him along a lane said to have been

* That butterfly was transformed, not from a caterpillar, but a snail. The sculptor made it a snail, but Mr. Keble did not like it at first. The next day he had thought of a good symbol for it, but the sculptor had altered it.

called the King's Lane ever since the corpse of William Rufus was conveyed along it to Winchester, in Purkis the charcoal-burner's cart.

We halted at a cottage, to ask after a motherless baby, the grandchild of one of the principal farmers in the parish, which had been put out to nurse there. Its grandfather came in; a fine old man, with great natural courtesy of manner. He walked with us some way; and when the Vicar asked permission to take us through a meadow which was no thoroughfare, to a pretty fir wood beyond, he answered heartily, "There is no place in the parish where Mr. Keble is not welcome to go." So we entered the fields, and skirted hedge-banks rich with blue-bells, and pleasantly shady. I remember pausing to enjoy a profusion of stitchwort, which shone out star-like amongst the green grass on the bank; but Mr. Keble only glanced at it, and said, "I am not fond of white flowers." He excepted the lily, however, declaring that it was "perfect."

We were now on high ground, and a striking view of coast and island was spread before us; overhead were snowy clouds moving rapidly over a sky of tender blue, and gleams of sunshine reflected and quenched by turns, in the distant Southampton water. The conversation, like those waters, was sometimes grave, sometimes sparkling: Mr. Keble gave us cheerful sketches of his early life, and especially of his first experiences as curate

of Hursley. We felt it to be no small privilege when he thus touched on his own history, for, to use the expressive French phrase, he was *detaché de soi*, to a degree seldom met with. It was curious to observe the difference—the contrast, rather—between the estimation in which others held him, and that in which he held himself. We, comparing him with other men, saw how bright was the light he shed around him; he, judging himself doubtless by no human standard, looked up habitually to the one faultless Pattern; what wonder, then, that the shadows of remaining imperfection, which others could scarcely detect, shewed dark and heavy to himself? This lowliness, so far from having anything strained about it, seemed "second nature" in him, and added to his real dignity. He was one of the last persons with whom any one possessed of even ordinary tact could have taken a liberty. I have seen him put impertinent curiosity to the rout by his serene simplicity of manner and speech.

While our host beguiled the way by his reminiscences, rich not so much in incident as in "homely thoughts and simple views" vividly portrayed, we reached a hanging wood, mostly of fir and larch, and scrambled merrily down its steep banks, slippery from layers of fir-needles. Then we reached a field of young corn, of pre-Raphaelite greenness, on the edge of which we stopped to rest. There he gave us details of the death of a little child,

in whom he had taken a warm interest, and of a curious presentiment one of its friends had had concerning it; then, for the first time since we had known him, he alluded to that unseen state of being which his heart so yearned after. In later days, he often recurred to the subject—especially after his dearly-loved sister's death—always speaking in that quiet subdued voice, which with him bespoke great earnestness. Of course, one *would* not write down such words, even if one *could* do them justice; but the impression I gathered from them, and should like to convey to you, is, that he thought of the holy dead as very near. To think of their present freedom from sin and temptation, seemed the greatest refreshment to his mind; while it inspired him with a sort of awe of their superior happiness, and their greater nearness to Christ. He never named the saints at rest, or our Lord's blessed mother, but in a tone of tender reverence, which to my mind was most instructive. How different from the coarse homage of those who would "disturb the heaven of their repose with rude invoking voice!"

After a while we re-entered Hursley Park, lingered under Mr. Keble's favourite yews on the slopes of Merdon, and came in sight for the second time of the chalk-pit which, you will remember, was associated with a very sorrowful crisis in his life.

He had looked wistfully towards it as we passed be-

fore, saying, "That place always reminds me of a great grief; I will tell you about it as we come back." And he did tell us about it, in few, abrupt, but thrilling words, the bare remembrance of which moves me deeply even now.

He never touched on the subject again *to us*, often as we passed that spot, so inseparably connected in his mind with the opening and reading of Dr. Newman's decisive letter. Even with persons of the most reserved nature, there are moments when the "o'erfraught heart" demands the relief of words for some pent-up grief, and this must have been one of those moments with him.

There was a long spell of silence before he resumed the thread of conversation, to give us an account of several American Churchmen who had lately visited Hursley, and brought cheering reports of the welfare and growth of the "sister Church." One of these gentlemen (Davis I think his name was) had also described to him the Oregon country, and a magnificent red cedar that grows there. One specimen of it, he averred, was 400 feet high, and 3600 rings had been counted within its bark. "If that computation was correct," Mr. Keble remarked, "and if every ring went for a year, then the red cedar must have been a seedling at the time that Jacob was serving for Rachel!" and he verified this date as soon as he was in his library, by referring to the marginal notes in his Bible.

Here is an exactly literal translation which Mr. Keble, about this time, made for me of some lines of Spanish poetry quoted in an article on Calderon :—

> "Heaven hath not so many stars,
> Nor ocean so many drops,
> Nor the daylight so many motes,
> Nor the flame so many sparks—
> As He hath pardons for sin."

He was at this time, and for long after, in the full swing of Bishop Wilson's Life. I may as well throw together here the few particulars I can add respecting the progress of the book.

In a note, written shortly before one of my Hampshire visits, Mr. Keble says: "It would have saved you the trouble of reading this, if I had thought of it in good time, when my wife was writing to you the other day; but, however, if you can say 'yes,' there will be no need for you to take the trouble of answering it. It is to ask if you can conveniently take charge of a document, which I have begged from the clergyman of Burton, Mr. S. U——, the Trust Deed of Bishop Wilson's school there. He is shy of the post; but if you will undertake it, he will send it to you in C—— before the 12th. If you had rather not, just give me one line, and I will stop him. It is very kind of you, with your old walls, river, and mountain distances, to think of our woods. I hope they will do their best to be pretty

when you come. I am hearing the sweetest of Jacobite music while I write, from two of my nieces—voice, harmonium, and piano; and I am ashamed to say it makes me almost feel disloyal in my old age."

In August, 1862, Mr. Keble thus alludes to the Life of Bishop Wilson, then about to be published. "This is not to draw a letter from *you*, for I know you ought to have all the rest you can get every way. . . . I must ask you to tell one of your charitable secretaries to say to me on your behalf, whether you have any objection to my printing in a note, (of course anonymously,) the paragraph which you kindly wrote to Charlotte, with a description of Burton Church and village. I am 'ripe for asking,' for the page is in proof; but I have told them to wait before they strike. I do hope you will have no dislike to its coming out. I have very little of the picturesque; and every inch is valuable, and will give the book a better chance.". . . He adds, "C. Y. is in Edinburgh: what a good thing for Edinburgh! I am ever, my dear friend, affectionately yours, J. KEBLE.

"I will send the revise of that paragraph when it comes, to you, and you can do what you like with it. My dear wife's true love to you, and to all."

In another letter, written December, 1863, Mr. Keble alludes to a discovery, happily made by the then Precentor of Chester Cathedral, the Rev. H. Venables, that

Bishop Wilson's name is on the list of scholars in the "King's School," attached to that foundation.

"I am afraid my wife speaks truth, as usual, when she hints to me that I have not yet ever thanked you for your most kind notes and contributions towards the Life of Bishop Wilson, (if such a thing should ever be written, for I feel that it has not been yet, but only some materials gathered for it). But one has a great satisfaction, as a sort of antiquary, in collecting these materials. Your information respecting your King's School is full of interest. One is glad to identify the place in which Tom Wilson scribbled, doubtless, and made blots, and kicked his heels like other boys. May I offer my thanks through you to Mr. Venables, and whoever else has kindly taken this trouble? Soon after your letter, came one from Mr. Bridson, the Douglas publisher, enclosing a copy of a *very* interesting letter from Bishop Wilson to Governor Horton, which, if the date be genuine, I mean correctly copied, proves a very considerable degree of reconciliation between the Bishop and his great opponent, James Lord Derby, and Horton himself."

Mr. Kéble adds, that he has been informed, "a large package of correspondence" between the Bishop and the Derby family has "turned up in the Library at Knowsley," and he expresses a desire to inquire further into it.

In his next letter, February, 1864, he writes of "Lord Derby's kindness in giving him such free leave" to inspect these papers—he waits for an opportunity of doing it in person; and adds: "So things are as they were in respect of anything to be learned of *our Bishop.*" That was his usual epithet for Bishop Wilson in speaking to me, and probably to all others who tried to assist him in this work—a gracious playful recognition of the infinitesimally small help which it was a privilege to offer. He goes on: "And, as I dare say you know full well, I am not hurried with outcries for a second edition. I rather *wish* than *hope* it *may* come to that in time, for there are several things, of course, which I wish otherwise; and there might be a good deal of curtailment, which would make the thing more readable. In fact, I am from time to time going over it with that view."

You will see, at the close of this little sketch, how Mr. Keble's thoughts turned to Burton (the good Bishop's beloved native village), a very short time before his death, and how anxious he was for the spiritual welfare of its inhabitants.

In June, 1858, we were once more with our friends in and near Winton. My diary recalls that we walked from Otterbourne, on a Thursday afternoon, to the Hursley Club tea-drinking. A warm sunny day—the

young plantations that skirted part of the lane of a soft green; between them glimpses of fields of the rich red Italian clover, a rarity to our northern eyes, and, as C. Y. remarked, giving one an idea of what the Nile looked like when its waters were turned to blood. Mrs. Keble led us through her shrubbery into the adjoining park, where races, climbing a greased pole for a leg of mutton, and various games, were going on. Mr. Keble, kindly, yet vigilant to preserve order, moved about amongst them in his college-cap. His "trusty and well-beloved" curate, Mr. Young, was no longer by his side; and he missed him sorely, especially on occasions like these.

"When anything goes wrong," (I have heard him say,) "and I am inclined to be stormy, Peter always calms me down." However, nothing apparently went wrong that afternoon. The men, I believe, had a dinner, at which Sir William Heathcote was present. The women had tea, arranged under white tents, and we were at once enlisted amongst the numerous band of tea-makers. "Everyone looked very hot and happy," says the diary; and the Vicar moved from table to table, replenishing our tea-pots, helping by a cheerful word here and there to keep up the ball of conversation, and now and then making some lucky tea-maker proud by tasting her "brew."

We stayed till the shadows had grown long, and the boles of some grand Scotch firs looked crimson in the sunset.

One of Mr. Keble's oldest and closest friends spent the next few days at the Vicarage, his health requiring some respite from almost ceaseless work. It was pleasant to see "all the flowers of life" unfolding for Mr. Keble while he held "sweet talk" with one whose aims, and hopes, and anxieties centred like his own, on the welfare and growth of Christ's kingdom. We had never seen "the Vicar" so buoyantly cheerful, so light of heart, before. One evening, while we hemmed table-cloths for an approaching school-treat, Mr. Keble brought out maps and views, and he and Mrs. Keble gave us animated accounts of their recent tour in Switzerland—of their stay at Thun, Lauterbrunn, Andermatt, and of the impressions made on them by the two extremes of grandeur and of minute loveliness, which mountain scenery presents. The avalanche and glacier, the bird's-eye primrose and the gentianella, each in its own way had charmed them; but the thought which above all others seemed to have a fascination for Mr. Keble, was that of having seen and explored "one great watershed of Europe." He looked out on the map the various rivers which take their rise amongst the Alps, and traced the Rhine, Rhone, Adige, and Inn, each from its cradle among

> "The strong foundations of the earth,
> Where torrents have their birth,"

to the home of its waters in the German Ocean, or the

Mediterranean, the Adriatic, or the Black Sea. He dwelt much on this. He also spoke feelingly of the sad finale of their tour—Mrs. Keble's severe illness at Basle. It so weakened her, that, in spite of her patient sweetness, the return home was very painful and distressing to both; nor had she even then recovered the shock.

At church, next morning, Mr. Keble preached on Joshua's dying words, afterwards read in the Evening Lesson. He ended by addressing parents, masters, &c., warning them of their responsibilities; and he said very forcibly, "Now what I want you *all* to remember is, that we must not content ourselves with leading a *random life;*" "we must each have a definite aim, that of serving Christ." Clergymen, he said, were especially bound to keep this aim always in view.

Much had been done, since our last visit, to strengthen and improve the choir, and the chants and hymns were beautifully sung.

Mr. Keble read prayers in the afternoon, and his friend preached on the lukewarmness of the Laodiceans, on the sin and peril of those who "serve God as far as they *must*, and the world as far as they *may*."

There was a particular spot on the south side of the Vicarage, a smooth shaven grassy knoll, where it was the custom to sit after the return from evening church in warm weather; people talked, or held their peace,

or read their books, as inclination prompted, and it was a specially cheerful restful time. Sometimes the last number of the "Gospel Missionary," or "Mission Field," was read aloud; sometimes the poem for the day in the "Christian Year," if its writer chanced to be absent, —for in *that* house, *that* book could not be openly produced as elsewhere, so sensitive was Mr. Keble about it. On this special evening we lingered on the grass-plot, watching the parting gleams on the church spire, and straining our ears to catch the notes of a nightingale in the woods. This led to one of those frequent talks about natural history and the strange instincts of birds and animals, which always seemed to refresh and divert Mr. Keble's thoughts, and in which his dear sister, when present and tolerably well, took an animated share. He spoke of the nightingale's fearlessness, singing by the highway side, (or even, as one present averred, in a bough overhanging a railway station); of the same bird's harsh scolding note when disturbed or quarrelling —and then the mystery of its winter haunts, unsolved at present, since we could hardly suppose the nightingales heard by Dr. Hooker in the Himalayas in November, to be our summer visitors!

Mr. Keble delighted, too, in an immense colony of sand-martens that had established themselves not far from Hursley. Near the "silver Itchen" is a large sand-pit, and they had completely riddled its steep

sides by boring with their beaks thousands of galleries leading up to their nests. How the tiny architects so did their work as to prevent the countless galleries from crumbling in, how in this "bird city," where the streets had no names and the doors no numbers, each occupant unerringly knew his own home, each parent his callow nestlings—here again was mystery, but of a kind to "tune the heart to trust and love."

I suppose there never was a poet yet who did not love the "lark that sings at Heaven's gate." Mr. Keble, himself so "true to the kindred points of heaven and home," was no exception to this rule; and I have heard him repeat Wordsworth's lines on the subject *con amore.* He certainly was, as was said of Mr. Wilberforce, one of the most "amusable" of mortals, "taking pleasure in the works" of creation, and quick to discern what some one has called "the comic element" in animals and birds, their graceful frolicsome ways, and their harmless wiles.

Twilight closed in, and the talk became less cheerful, as must indeed be the case between thoughtful people, when man, and the "many inventions" he has "sought out" become their theme. Mr. Keble spoke severely and with a touch of satire, of some recent publications, shallow but mischievous in their tone, and covertly trying, he said, to weaken our faith in the Old Testament miracles, and in God's power to

suspend or modify, when He sees fit, His own laws in His own creation! The friends then looked over together a lately published German *Bild Bibel* or Picture Bible, which had, they agreed, nothing of the Bible in it! I remember feeling glad to hear them say, *àpropos* of disputed Scripture sites, that we need not renounce our cherished belief that Moriah was identical with the site of the Temple of Solomon. No evidence had been brought yet to disprove it; Abraham's not reaching the Mount of Sacrifice till the third day was no sufficient argument against it, as he and his son might travel slowly; the distance would be about thirty miles, and we know that they took the "wood for the burnt-offering" with them.

It was either in '57 or '58 that I received a letter from Mrs. Keble expressing great anxiety about the Divorce Bill about to be brought into Parliament. Mr. Keble and his friends set up a Petition against it, and the object of this letter was to ask us to join our efforts to theirs, in procuring intelligent signatures to it. Though unused to such work, we readily consented, feeling how much the peace and purity of English homes would be affected by such a measure. We obtained a large number of willing signatures, and in the course of many conversations on the subject with house-wives in farms, or cottages, or around iron-

works, gleaned some acute and sensible remarks, which I retailed to Mrs. Keble. One of these, which she refers to in the extract given below, ran thus: A young married woman, living at a turnpike, to whom I tried to explain the matter, exclaimed: "Now I see what the forgemen mean, when they pass by to their work, and call out to me, 'Aha, Missus, there's a good time coming; they're going to make a law that'll rid us of our wives for six shillings!' And who'll bring up your children? I ask 'em back; and they've nothing to say to that."

"HURSLEY,
July 31.

"MY DEAR ——,

"One word more on the subject of the Petition. Have you any other sayings of the poor people whom you or your friends applied to? such as those in your last note. We have had many others, very pointed and full of right feeling, which we think might be of use if they could reach the ears or eyes of some of our friends in the House. You will perhaps see in Sir W. Heathcote's speech last night, reference to what you said of those who are rejoicing at the prospect of the license. We reckon now about 23,000 (signatures) and to-morrow is to be our last great receiving-day."

* * * * * *

In strong contrast with this account of Mrs. Keble's zealous co-operation with her husband in his attempt to stem the torrent of evil, is the following extract

from another letter of hers, describing a peaceful village festival.

"HURSLEY,
Oct. 27.

"Yesterday we kept our Commemoration Festa. The day was not genial, but much better than Tuesday; and there was no interruption to the little festivities, except to the girls' play out-of-doors. The musical part of the service was very nice, and Mr. Legeyt preached. The frost had come just too soon for us; not a dahlia, nor flower of any kind, except a few half-blown chrysanthemums and pinched Michaelmas daisies, for the decorations; but with evergreens, and white and red berries, and some very willing fingers from the *curatage* to help, the church *did* look festive. We had five from College Street, all bright and cheerful. I went about all day with a packet from your sister in my pocket, not having time to open it till the guests were gone. I believe I enjoyed it all the more for having 'kept it up,' as it were, so long. That evening that she was walking through the snow was intensely cold here, without snow, clear and starlight. On our way back from Evening Service, we were standing looking at the stars, (by the dining-room window,) and the Bishop (of Brechin) was talking about Dante, when the sky behind the church was suddenly bathed in electrical light, like a flash of lightning, only it was *so* clear! We saw it twice, and it was seen at Otterbourne, and in College Street.

"Yours ever affectionately,
C. K."

"Elisabeth desires her love."

In the summer of '58, Mrs. Keble writes: "I have performed the feat of a day-visit to the Crystal Palace

on the 'Messiah' day; music never tires me, and it happened to be very cool, so that it was a great treat, even though we were not quite near enough to the orchestra to hear the solos to advantage. One can imagine nothing on earth to equal the 'Unto us a Child is born;' and somehow the complete theological meaning of the whole oratorio never struck me so much before; one felt it quite a grievance to be cheated of 'Thou art gone up,' and 'The Lord gave the word,' and scarcely less of one to have any *encoring*."

In 1859, I had a passing glimpse of Hursley Vicarage and its dear trio, Mr. Keble and his "two wives," (as in a note he playfully called them). Miss Keble, whom I then saw for the last time, looked frailer and slighter, and more transparent, but cheerful, and full of quiet observing interest in all home events, as well as in those Church questions which so deeply affected her brother. My last and most vivid remembrance of her, is as she stood by Mr. Keble's chair, with one pale little hand on his shoulder, and the "soft smiling eyes" beaming with amusement. He was giving me an animated account of that memorable first journey to Oxford in 1806, with his father, when he, a "raw lad" of fourteen and a half, tried for a scholarship at Corpus, and won it. His descriptions of the various dignitaries to whom his father thought it well to introduce him, and of the awe they inspired him with, (Dr. Routh, of

Magdalen, amongst others, to boyish eyes an elderly man even then,) were exceedingly entertaining. His gentle sister grew quite eager on the subject, and reminded him of trifling circumstances he had forgotten, and added pretty touches of her own to the narrative. I could not help mentally wondering whether, if *she* had tried for the scholarship at Corpus, she might not have won it too?

The illness of Miss Keble, and her death at Hursley, in August, 1860, had a great and lasting effect on the beloved survivors. Mrs. Keble had exerted herself beyond her power in nursing, and in watching by the bed of suffering; and when we met a year afterwards, the traces of exhaustion had not wholly passed away. Mr. Keble, too, was aged and shaken; yet there was a wonderful peace, and elevation of feeling, if I may call it so, mingled with their sense of loss, as though they had gone down to the very brink of the dark river with their sister, and been granted a glimpse of the "pleasant land" beyond. Mr. Keble more than once condescended to share these thoughts with me, and to speak of that "intermediate state" as one of loving, waiting, resting, and prayer—prayer for the speedy coming of His Kingdom—prayer, too, for those on earth for whom, when with us, they used to pray; we have no hint given us, he thought, that they dis-

continue that. One could tell, in later years especially, by the half-stifled voice, how intensely he felt those precious words in the Church Militant Prayer, in which we bless God's Holy Name for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear.

Mrs. Keble writes thus, on the tenth day after her sister's death :—

"HURSLEY,
August 16th.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have known all this time that your helpful thoughts were with us, and that dear Mrs. M—— told you from time to time what I most wished you to know. Now, however, that the dark hour of her suffering is (as we trust) passed for ever, and we can think of our dear sister as safe in the haven where she longed to be, it is a pleasure and refreshment to come to you for a little quiet talk. . . . . I am glad to think that you knew her—I will not say, well enough to love her—for I do believe there was something in her very look that impressed most persons. . . . . She enjoyed your being here, and always liked to hear your letters, so that you have really had a share in contributing to her pleasures. I suppose we hardly yet realize that we shall see and hear her no more here ; one seems to have had no room in one's heart for anything but thankfulness in thinking of her *release*. I love to use that word, for her condition during the last fortnight was more that of a bird fluttering and struggling to escape from its cage, than anything else ; until the last twenty-two hours, when the restlessness and suffering seemed to cease, and a quiet sleep succeeded, from which there was no waking here. Unworthy as one's thoughts must needs be of the change to her, yet they are all such

as bring the deepest comfort; that she is at rest and free from suffering, are of the lowest; yet this is something; still more (comforting) is it to think of her in the company of those dear ones of her family gone before—her parents, and two sisters like herself, and two aunts, (one most saintly,) to whom she always thought she owed her early training. Best and sweetest of all is it to believe her to be in that Presence that she tried above all things to realize in her daily life. One fancies it must be helpful to one to follow her in imagination, but the danger is of one's failing to follow that example which must have been set before one as a special blessing.

"We had the great comfort of our brother and sister from Bisley for ten days before her departure, and they are still here; we are going into Devonshire in a few days. You know that it is always a pleasure to me to hear from you. . . . . I trust that you are not in more anxiety than usual, nor suffering from nursing. With kind love to your sister, ever, dear Friend,

"Yours very affectionately,
CH. KEBLE."

I think there is something original and very touching in the remarks on sick-nursing contained in the following letter from Mrs. Keble; it alludes to a bereavement similar to their own in 1860, but more unexpected and rapid, and accompanied with more violent pain.

"HURSLEY,
Oct. 5, 1863.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"If I could have photographed the thoughts which have been so often occupied with you during the last three weeks,

you would not have been left without a letter so long; but I could not write to you in a hurry, so have put it by from day to day, feeling sure of a kind interpretation. And now I have to thank you most heartily for your dear and welcome letter. Dear K—— has given me a few particulars of that last illness, which have helped me a little to go along with you, and to be very very glad that you were there, and able to take so large a share in the nursing and watching—that watching and waiting so mysterious and unlike anything else, and that does so marvellously make one know the *real* from the *unreal*, for a time, at least. I am sure all your friends have reason to be thankful that you have such help in your doctor, and still more in your clergyman; and if you, dear ——, have suffered somewhat from all you have gone through, one must not grudge it. 'Ye ought *also* to lay down your lives for the brethren,' always seems as if it ought to apply to nursing the sick, and willingly undertaking the cost which that involves; and though you were drawn to it by natural affection as well as Christian love, one may well believe that it is no less a work blessed by Him Who laid it upon you; and then the way in which it has been softened to your mother, must have brought something like a reprieve to you who are left. Perhaps to her it may be no unwelcome thought that 'her store in Paradise' grows beforehand. . . . . .

"Your niece's visit came at a bustling time, but at her age that was not likely to be against the grain, and I assure you her hands were very helpful. My husband says she and Annie M—— were like a 'couple of larks' in the house. We wished to have kept her for our Harvest Day, but her strong sense of duty made her proof against all temptation to stay, as Papa had settled for her to go home the day before. . . . .

"We have had a spell of warm wet weather, which has

been useful to me, but I could hardly wish it to continue, for I fear it is unhealthy. Several of our large families in widely separated parts of the parish have had scarletina; hitherto it has been of a light kind, but we hear of it as a more serious visitation in other places, and one knows that 'fevers love moisture.'"

This letter ends by an allusion to a visit paid by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Longley, to Hursley Park, and to the very happy hours Mr. Keble spent with him, in congenial conversation chiefly on Church matters.

I have coupled these two letters together, because the last seems a kind of commentary on the first, shewing the self-forgetting spirit in which Mrs. Keble had ministered to her declining and suffering sister.

Hers was the

> "alma gentil che non fa scusa,
> Ma fa sua voglia della voglia altrui."

It seems worth recording, that Mr. Keble expressed himself strongly respecting the value and calming effects of attendance on Daily Service in times of bereavement. He thought it well that mourners should secure that blessing even before the funeral, in cases where health permitted, and where the church could be reached quietly and privately.

In the autumn of 1861, Mrs. Selwyn came home

for a few months from New Zealand, and Mr. and Mrs. Keble pressed her to re-visit Hursley, which she did, with her younger son, in September. They had always, and specially since 1854, when the Bishop and Mrs. Selwyn became personally known to them, taken a lively interest in that great work at the Antipodes. I remember how Mr. Keble used to pounce upon the "Mission Field," or upon any private letter from New Zealand, that brought tidings of the Bishop's safety in his riskful Melanesian cruises. Mrs. Selwyn's visits to Norfolk Island were full of interest to him, and so were all details connected with the training of young natives at Auckland. "I do not like (he said to a mutual friend) any one so much as to drop in to tea at St. John's College, without my knowing it."

During Mrs. Selwyn's former visit to England, it came to Mr. Keble's ear that she had once expressed to a friend a strong wish to carry back with her to New Zealand a "Christian Year," *his* gift, and with her name written in it by himself. He at once broke through his usual reticence about that book; he selected a choice copy on his next visit to Oxford, had it bound (I believe) in white vellum, and wrote her name in it. "I would do a great deal more than that for her," he said, heartily.

I must tell you that as soon as the day of Mrs. Selwyn's arrival was fixed, Mrs. Keble, with most thoughtful

kindness, wrote to ask me to meet her; and so, after a two years' absence, I found myself once more in green and peaceful Hursley; doubly green and peaceful it appeared from my having become, in the interval, a dweller in a city.

"The visit to Hursley in '61," writes Mrs. Selwyn, "is quite a bright spot in my memory; how well I remember it all! the kind notes which brought it about, the genial reception, and the attentions from such people as made one feel very small. That which I like best to recall was Mr. Keble's kindness to Johnnie over his Eton Sunday questions. I found him sitting by the boy in my room, entering into them as keenly as if he had to shew them up, and bringing books of reference to help him. It was such a pretty sight to see the youthful face, and the beaming sweet expression of the old one, as they bent over a large black quarto Mr. Keble had carried up. My 'mother's thought' was, Oh, what an honour for my son! it will be something for him to be proud of, to remember to the end of his days."

The day after our arrival was Sunday and Michaelmas Day in one. Mr. Keble preached in the morning a plain, strong, almost stern sermon, warning against the "crafts and assaults" of evil spirits, real personal enemies to each soul. Then he spoke of good angels, their loving ministry, and their presence in church, briefly, but in words so simple and real, that it seemed as if the rustling

of their wings were close around. As we all returned through the garden from evening church, I recollect Mr. Keble stooped to gather some "autumn violets sweet and rare" that grew by the dining-room window, and offered them to Mrs. Selwyn. For the next few days the lawn often rang with cheery sounds, "Johnnie" and the spaniel Rover chasing one another through the bushes, and over the sunk fence, and one might see the Vicar's kind face not seldom looking out complacently on these gambols.

Those halcyon days passed quickly, and they parted, not to meet again, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away." On the next Thursday, the Rev. C. Penrice, then "deputation" for the Home Missions[f], came to lecture on that subject in the Hursley schoolroom. He shall himself describe his reception.

"My first introduction to Mr. Keble was not reassuring; I had arrived during Evening Prayer in church, where he was, and at once went thither by the garden-gate; when it was over, seeing him talking with friends in the churchyard, I preceded him through the same gate, waylaying him as he passed; when he caught sight of me, he evidently took me for some impertinent stranger, who had intruded into his garden, and gave me certainly a very frigid look; when, however, I ex-

[f] Now Rector of Plumstead, Norwich.

plained who I was, and how I came there, nothing could exceed his kindness of manner."

Mr. Penrice writes of "the entire absence of all self-consciousness about Mr. Keble," and adds: "I remember feeling very small when he, in the most artless way, asked my opinion on some subject connected with the Church politics of the day; and I was afterwards surprised at my own assurance in venturing to quote the concluding words of the 'Christian Year' on the Ninth Sunday after Trinity, in closing the Lecture in his school-room on Home Missions; the consciousness of a presence more self-asserting than his would probably have disarmed me at the moment. . . . . He kindly gave me a copy of his metrical Version of the Psalms in return for a little paper on the subject of 'Clerical Retreats,' which I ventured to shew him, and of which he expressed a warm approval."

We walked in the twilight to the school-house in the village, and found a rustic assemblage, girls and boys (my boys, as their Vicar called them), and cottagers, and other parishioners. The lecture was given, well illustrated by large bold drawings of "street Arabs," and such-like denizens of the worst parts of London. Mr. Keble listened intently, and, well knowing how tender-spirited he was about crime and misery, I rejoiced that the gloom of the subject was relieved by many cheering traits. One of these I must recall, be-

cause it pleased him so much. In February of that year, a clergyman was asked late at night to visit a dying woman in a notoriously bad street, in an adjoining district, of which the pastor chanced to be away. He decided to go with the questionable-looking individual who came for him. He led him to a tall house, and up many stairs to a large squalid room full of people lying on the floor, who stared or scowled at him. His guide pointed to a girl, obviously dying, and in the greatest want. The clergyman saw that her body must first be ministered to, so he held up a half-sovereign, and asked who would be kind enough to go out and get him some tea, brandy, &c., for her. Several men jumped up, and without picking or choosing, he commissioned the foremost, and then waited rather anxiously for his return. In a very short time he re-appeared with the articles, and with the change, which he duly told down. Revived by stimulants, the poor girl lived an hour or two, and hearkened to the Word of Life, perhaps for the first time. She had never been taught to pray. She died, and five or six of those wild men insisted on seeing the clergyman home. He talked freely with them by the way, and two of them had attended his church regularly ever since. You may think how this *finale* pleased Mr. Keble, and how much he felt for the clergyman, whose lot, unlike his own, was cast amid darkness and cruel habitations.

A letter home of this date, says:—"I drove to Netley Abbey with Mrs. Keble. Mr. K. was longing to visit his beloved ruins, but he is preparing his young people for Confirmation, and expected several groups in the course of the day. Then he went to inquire after a little sick child, and it had just died, and 'It looked beautiful, so beautiful! I'm glad I went; the parents were soothed, I think; they are sadly cut up, poor things!' We talked over Charles I.; and Mr. K. was quite interested to hear of our ancestor's falling sick with grief on hearing of the King's death; but when I rather apologized for the said ancestor's having got well again, he broke into a hearty laugh. They are charmed with little A.'s photograph; Mr. K. looked at it long, and said he never saw so sweet a picture; he laid it down, then took it up again, commenting on the 'pretty child with a look of trouble on her face,' and adding, 'I like to hear about little A.' I gave them the photograph, you may suppose; they have never forgotten her tears over Saul, when she was seven years old, 'because he had been so good at first.'" Again:—"The other day, somebody laughingly quoted a line from the *Allegro*. Mr. Keble laughed too, but the next instant the expression of his face changed, and he said with startling abruptness, 'I've no love for that poet!' It set me thinking on the strange unlikeness between Milton the politician and theologian, and Milton the poet; between his

pamphlets supporting regicide and Puritanism, and his *Penseroso*, with its gentle tender strain, and love of cathedral worship, worthy of Mr. Keble."

Early in 1862 Mrs. Keble was attacked by illness of a most severe and startling character; in fact, as it proved to be, the "beginning of the end:" very saddening it was for those who loved her to see and hear of; but I suppose even Mr. Keble, but for this fiery trial, would not have known the full extent of her powers of endurance.

He writes to me, April 9, '62 :—

"Charlotte is certainly a great-deal better than she was; but the shock was so very violent, though but for a short time, that I suppose it must take a good while for the frame to right itself properly (if so be) again. The doctor has not said so, but I have a strong impression that if we had had to send for our old medical friend from Romsey, he could hardly have arrived in time. How can I ever be thankful enough that this attack, which was unlike any former one, did not visit us two or three years ago, before we had a practitioner in the village on whom we could depend. He proves indeed very skilful and sympathizing, and a most desirable attendant in every way. We have had Mrs. P. Young, as you know, helping to nurse, and since she went home, our youngest niece, C——, from Bisley; so the patient has not been very dull. And to-day has been the first for a good many days that she has not been downstairs with us for a good many hours; but her pulse was somehow so sinking last night, that she has stayed in her room by order to-day.

(I must now go to her; I will add the morning's report.) 10 Ap. 1½ p.m. Our small doctor has just been here, praising her pulse, and recommending champagne; so we are what one may call jolly. I trust we may hear as good an account of you, but you must not again be naughty, to do us a favour, in writing without the doctor's leave. We shall hear of you from the M——s."

He goes on to say:—

"By-the-bye, I heard yesterday in a roundabout way that the *kind Doctor*[s] is laid up; I hope it was no more than an occasional cold. A. was here to be confirmed, and saw her god-mamma; it was a nice day, and our church looked very pretty; and our Bishop, both then and on the Saturday at Ampfield, did give such fatherly advice in such fatherly tones, that it did one's heart good. Dear C. sends you her kind love, and you are not to think of her as suffering, only she is weak; she hopes to write to you soon. Be sure we remember you; graceless must we be if we did not. All good be with you, your dear mother, sisters and all.

"Ever your affectionate friend,
J. K."

Again:—

"*H. V., Aug.* 21, '62.

"MY DEAR KIND FRIEND,

"I know you will be glad to hear that, although of course very far from well, my wife is really improved (I can hardly say improving from day to day) under the direction of Dr. Williams, of Brook-street, whom we consulted in London, and by the help of almost daily drives, and a run down

[s] His usual epithet for his dear and trusted friend, Dr. Moberly.

to the Dart and back. We went to see if we could fix on a winter home, but are still hovering between Penzance and Torquay. I wish I could hear a thorough good (account) of you with your N.W. breezes. . . . . Fieldhouse is here, and very charming it is, and we have hope of a little private visit of our own from E—— and A——. . . . ."

It was about this time that Mr. Keble sat to Richmond for the delightful portrait, of which the engraving is a treasure to so many. "I have been gazing," writes a mutual friend (Colonel W.), "at Holl's beautiful copy of that picture, and each time I look at it I marvel at the genius which has brought out the seraph's fire that burned within, and flung its glory over eye and lip and brow."

They moved to Penzance for that winter and the spring of '63, on Mrs. Keble's account, returning to Hursley for the summer. In August, while staying with a brother at Netley, near Southampton, I received a loving summons to Hursley, from Mrs. Keble's own pen. Mr. Keble met me at Winchester, and our drive out to the Vicarage was fraught with recollections of sorrowful interest. He seemed rather glad to speak freely of *her* precarious state; it was almost always now *she* or *her*, no name was needed to shew in which direction his thoughts were incessantly tending, "true as the needle to the pole," and like that, trembling and quivering. Then we talked about Bishop Wilson's Life,

lately come out, and of which he had most kindly sent me a copy, with "thanks for valuable help" inscribed within. From anyone else those words would have seemed almost a mockery, but from him they were pleasant, and one was quite content to act the part of the fly on *his* chariot wheel. He spoke of the exceeding dearth of domestic incident in that life. There was something touching, he thought, in that little oasis of married happiness, not described, only summed up in the words, "she was an excellent woman;" then the long stern life stretching far away beyond the allotted fourscore years, till the memory of the "wife of his youth" must have become distant and dim.

Mr. Keble was almost overcome when speaking thus of "Mary Patten," "the companion of her husband's soul," as the older biographer prettily calls her. He said a good deal about the discipline kept up by Bishop Wilson, Bishop Gastrell of Chester, and others of that day; he thought that, in some modified shape at least, it would have been useful now, as a check upon open vice—and he lamented (as nearly as I can remember) that matters affecting our conscience, and our religious faith even, were now decided by Parliament, instead of by our spiritual superiors, the power in such things gradually drifting away from the Church to the world. I felt these were "great matters, too high for me," and could only listen with respect to

what fell from those honoured lips. It was a comfort to see him smile at last, as he said, "Some of my friends don't agree with me—but I can't *always*, you know, look at things from the legal point of view!"

He was, at this time (Mrs. Keble said) cheered by observing a more healthy tone, "less Germanism" and more decided loyalty towards the teaching of our Church, in his dearly loved Oxford. But he seemed very low at times about the evils in his own parish, and the terrible amount of vice and crime everywhere. "Do try," he said to me one morning, "and put me into better humour with our civilization! we hear so much about it now, and I don't doubt it's a good thing; yet somehow every newspaper I read shakes my faith in it!" then he adduced some instances in which chemistry and other sciences had been turned to a wicked and cruel use, and asked if these were not barbarisms?—He seemed a little apprehensive at that time of his memory beginning to fail him; "scarce a day passed," he said, "without his old friend the Vicar of Hursley being found guilty of some unintentional neglect or discourtesy;" but I do not believe that his friends were sensible of any such failure of memory, either then or later.

Mrs. Keble seemed at first sight less altered by her illness than might have been expected—only a little

thinner, and more delicate and hectic in colouring. But it soon became apparent how much weaker she was, and how easily her breathing was hurried by walking any distance, or going upstairs. With this tendency, fresh air without fatigue was the best tonic she could have, so she drove out each day. Once she took me to Rownhams through a charming forest district, with pleasant glades, and peeps down to the river. But she generally combined some parochial visitings with her drives, and therefore preferred her recently acquired donkey-carriage, drawn by the "Jacky," now immortalized in the memoir. He certainly was a pattern animal, strong and willing, and patient in his long waitings at cottage doors. She liked driving him herself, only now and then resigning the reins when his spirits ran away with him, and he pulled too hard, as sometimes happened when crossing the turf in the park. He really seemed to mind her gentle voice, and even when tormented by the forest fly, would stand still at her bidding till one could alight and rid him of the enemy. The cottager was right who, to her great amusement, remarked that Mrs. Keble was blest in her donkey[h]!

When indoors, the dear invalid's voice was weak, and speaking seemed an effort; but I observed that

[h] I am afraid Jacky has not kept up his character since. His head was turned, and he has shewn too plainly the danger of being a great man's donkey.

when out, on a cool day, the strain seemed much less, and she readily took her bright part in conversation. Those were very happy, and I trust profitable, hours to me, I used often to think she had caught not a little of the poet spirit from her husband; while, at other times, her practical suggestions and encouragements, when we talked of prosaic matters, or of district and infirmary visiting, were truly helpful. Well might Mr. Keble call her, as he often playfully did, his *Conscience.*

We parted again, and nothing suited for your eye is said in her letters till the middle of March, '64, when she writes from Torquay: "My husband is preaching every Friday during this Lent, at one of the churches here, on the Types of our Lord in the Old Testament, beginning with Abraham offering up Isaac; and I am glad to say these lectures are *written.*" Speaking of bodily suffering in the same letter, she says: "Welcome as the hope of ease is, I am sure you must know what it is to feel almost glad to be in pain sometimes, rather than ease—when one thinks of the fearful state of the most important things. . . . I hope the 'Litany' (of our Lord's Warnings) came to you safely; I believe it is very much used; a penny edition has been asked for, and one can't but hope it may prove instructive as well as intercessory. My husband was much vexed to see that the Lord's Prayer had been

omitted by mistake; it should come in at the end of page 22. . . . . We have escaped snow here, but the wind has been very cold some days, and the weather so variable, that one is obliged to be very cautious about going out. There have been some sweet bird-singing days, in earnest of spring. Have you read the second volume of Mendelssohn's Letters? they make one love him and his music more than ever.". . . .

You will remember how the tidings of Mr. Keble's attack of paralysis (Nov. '64) carried sorrow to many hearts. Mrs. Keble, calm though heart-stricken, writes thus about him:—

"PENZANCE, *the 24th of January*, '65.

"You will, I know, like to have a direct bulletin, and I like you to know how he is. It has been one among many comforts, that all the doctors who have seen him agree in a hopeful view of his case. They all said that there was reason to hope for restoration even to working powers, if he would spare himself for a time; and he has so dutifully gone on observing these rules, that one does rather cling to the hope—though I have tried not to look on, but to be satisfied with the improvement that has been granted day by day. Everybody who sees him thinks, as I do, that he has recovered his natural hue and countenance very much; and lately he has ventured to look into books without continuous reading, in a way that relieves the tedium of doing nothing, and makes him feel less dependent. He could not write a letter, but he dictates the

substance of answers to letters, so that he can still take a little part with those who have to work on without his presence now. I feel a little anxious sometimes, when he begins to use his head; yet I believe it is safer for him to put out a thought than to brood upon it.

"This place is more refreshing than Torquay, less of a watering-place, and more picturesque; besides that, we are close to the glorious old sea, almost too close in stormy weather. But there is continual interest in watching it, and he enjoys walking on the sands whenever the weather is favourable.

"My cousin, James Young, has been with us during his whole vacation, and most useful as well as cheering, but he must go back to Oxford on Friday. I hardly know what we shall do without him, and it makes one understand how kind his parents have been in sparing him..... We need an able-bodied companion, as, alas! I have no breath to spare for reading aloud, which has now become a necessity with us.

"Can you imagine our having turned whist-players? every evening we have a rubber. I'm afraid I am very stupid, never having tried my hand or wits at it before—but I feel very grateful for the little variety it affords.

"We thought of you and your happy little party on Holy Innocents' Day..... To sum up my report of him. I know you will rejoice to hear that the last time we had the Holy Communion (*i.e.* last week) he was able to be Priest himself.

"Please still (she adds in a P.S.) to remember us in your prayers *and thanksgivings*—for one feels *so* wanting!"

Within a week of the date of this letter Mrs. Keble had another violent attack, which was followed by an

untoward accident, from pouring boiling water over her foot. She writes thus cheerfully about it, on the 4th of March, '65:—"I have been a very bad nurse to my invalid—but after spending nearly a month in my bedroom, am downstairs again, hoping after we have had a little turn of equinoctial weather to get out into the fresh air. Our winter has consisted mostly of wind and rain, and we have seldom been long without a bright sunny day—blue sea and blue sky. I have a most luxurious bed-room, with a perfect view of the Bay; indeed, from my *bed* I could see only sea and sky and a point of land. One of my great treats during this confinement has been reading a French book which C. M. Y—— in her kindness lent me—a memoir of a most saintly person, a sufferer in various ways during the Revolution. I have often heard people say they have felt as if they lost a relation when "Guy" (of Redclyffe) dies; but there is this difference when one has to take leave of Madame de Montagu, that one feels she is still living, and a member of the same Body (as ourselves). And through the whole book there is so little to remind one of the difference of Communion, and so much to humble one to the dust.". . . . . She adds, "You can hardly realize what it is to be, as far as one knows, entirely useless—seeing nothing of the poor for such a long time. However, I don't mean this to be grumbling, for

I am most thankful to have this place of shelter; not as hitherto for my myself only, but for my husband too, it seems so salutary. He has recovered his looks almost entirely, and begins to long for regular occupation—but as the doctors say, he must be content to 'vegetate' while he is away. I am sure the powers will come when it is God's Will that he should work again, though perhaps not as before."

Then follow many inquiries and loving comments on our doings, and those of mutual friends, whom no pressure of illness or trouble could ever make her forget.

A letter from Hursley, June 2nd, says that Mr. Keble is "gaining ground," but forbidden to do work. "Preaching would be suicidal;" he had however read one Lesson in church on a Sunday, and was able to visit his villagers, and to take longer drives in the "big carriage, poor Jacky being unfortunately lame and under medical treatment!" They had tarried in Devonshire on their way home, "at Dartington, near Totnes, all among the delicious woods, and," she adds, "my husband felt very sensibly the relief of the *green*, just then in its freshest—after the glare of the sea and a treeless shore. Our dear niece and her six home chicks were charmingly well—the youngest, six months old, the perfection of a healthy babe. She is a 'Cecilia,' and in my lap she first realized the delight of making a sound with

the pats of her little fat hand on the keys of the piano —the other little ones who stood round were no less charmed with the performance, clapping their hands in ecstasy. . . . I like you to know how much cause we have to be thankful, and I hope there will be no hindrance to your coming to judge for yourself."

Mrs. Keble thus alludes to the recent death of the author of the "Baptistery:"

"I believe Mrs. Isaac Williams and all the family at Stinchcombe were aware that the end was near. To us it was rather unexpected, though we knew from himself that he had been failing very much during the winter; his last note was cheerful, and spoke of our meeting again, either here or *there;* he was then looking forward to Dr. Newman's visit with great pleasure. About an hour before the end, he asked for the *Sacra Privata,* but was not able to read it; nothing could be more gentle or sleep-like than *the* great change when it came, nor more suitable to the life of watching which preceded it, if one may venture to judge. (Whitsun Eve.) I must reserve all else for another time, and only give you our best and loving thoughts and wishes for this blessed time."

Some weeks later I went to Hursley, very anxious, as you may imagine, to "judge for myself" what changes the last two eventful years had wrought in the Vicar-

age. Perhaps it was a sign that Mr. Keble's deafness had slightly increased, that the sound of a friend's carriage-wheels did not bring him, as of yore, into his porch. It was high summer, a more than usually flowery and bowery summer, as you may remember, and every window and door stood wide open; a whiff of jessamine sweetness met me at the door, and the little drawing-room looked quite a sun-trap. Mr. Keble was standing with his back to me, but turned, and came up with extended hands, saying, "I rejoice with you in your new Bishop—have you seen the appointment?" and he shewed it me in the newspaper, and spoke fully and warmly about it, to Mrs. Keble's amusement, before the more conventional greetings were so much as thought about. When animated, he did not betray the ravages illness had made upon him—but when in repose, (and that was, perforce, often; for he could not walk, or talk, or keep on the stretch in any way, for long,) you saw how pale and sunk he had become. The clearness of his utterance was not affected, and he was keen in his perceptions, and as warm and tender-hearted as ever.

It was a new thing to see him the "chartered invalid" of the house, and dear Mrs. Keble watching over him, and keeping her many ailments and increased feebleness in the background as far as might be, to evade his anxious eye. They usually had two

cheering young nurses with them, Miss C—— a young cousin, and Mr. James Young, long before described to me as "son and daughter in one." He was at the Vicarage at this time, and quite his "uncle's" and "aunt's" mainstay.

Mr. Keble still went to the full stretch of his physical powers in parish work. The Sunday I was there he took no part in the Morning Service, but catechized in the afternoon—as great an exertion, one would have thought, as preaching. After luncheon, he had a class of big boys in his study, and one could hear the kind voice questioning and explaining. The "bit of sugar" with which he dismissed them was a true coal-pit adventure told in verse, which he read aloud.

On other days he went to the school and village, at least once a-day; but on his return, often lay down on the sofa, with a look of great exhaustion; he would then put on a little apparatus contrived for relieving head-ache by pressure against the temples and brow. He had grown fond of being read to, and expressed one morning a wish to hear "The Story of Queen Isabel," by M. S., which a friend had given me. We had gone half through it, when he remembered that his hour for going to the boy's school was come: he looked sadly unfit for the walk, and the heat of the day was scorching; but for once, Mrs. Keble's pleading look and shake of the head did not move him. So

I mustered courage, and holding up Queen Isabel, asked whether he had the heart to leave her just at the crisis of her fate? This piece of audacity happily succeeded, and with an arch sweet smile he returned to the sofa and the poem. He afterwards dipped into the other poems in the volume, and pointed out the stanzas on Garibaldi, as containing some of the most spirited lines he remembered anywhere.

I found him one day exploring among his bookshelves, and he pointed out to me one of the standard Church histories — Mosheim's, I think. A lady had come to him, he said, some years ago, who was unsettled in her allegiance to our Church by the many schisms which rend it; he had taken down that work, and shewn her from it that in the first three centuries of the Christian era, more sects and heresies had sprung up than in any succeeding ones—so that the unhappy divisions in our Church were not peculiar to her, nor any reason for leaving her. This argument had happily had its due weight with the lady.

The "Idylls of the King" had lately come out, and Mr. Keble spoke of them, originating the subject himself. He had not yet *read* them, he said, but he had seen enough evidently to create a strong interest in his mind in the character of Arthur; its grandeur and holiness, and great pity for the sinner, seemed like a sort of parable with a higher meaning than appeared. His read-

ing was, of course, more desultory now, and he said he often took up "Golden Deeds," and refreshed himself with one or two. He said this, standing in the window that looked east, with the book in his hand, and he went on to speak affectionately of the writer, and to say, "She has written many good things, but this is the best of all." That window was an idling place for us all; the thick luxuriant mass of jessamine that framed it, was so covered with white stars this warm summer, that there was hardly any leaf or stalk to be seen. Its sweetness was almost cloying, especially at night; and so was the scent from the churchyard lime trees. There was a great buzzing of insects; and that beautiful creature, the hawk's-head humming-bird moth, rarely seen in Cheshire, flitted in and out incessantly, darting its long tongue into the jessamine flowers, then dancing away into the sunshine, and flashing back again with the speed of light. It was a most distracting little creature, making all fixed attention to one's book or writing impossible; and well I remember how, when I tried to look away from the window, its graceful clear-cut shadow would flit before my eyes on the table, lost for a moment in the motionless shadows of the jessamine-bush, then springing out into warm light again.

Some old writer says, "The last of everything is affecting;" so, in those last days at the Vicarage, no incident with which the memory of those friends is

connected appears to me trivial. In the evenings we had a rubber of whist, and a very salutary little change it made for the invalid. I was told he had been a very scientific player in his college days, but had discontinued playing till a few months since—after his seizure. He certainly remembered each card that each person played accurately, and he was full of playful retorts, and alarming threats if his partner should revoke—on the whole, however, he was more silent than heretofore, and much more feeble. When the Bishop of Fredericton came to Hursley for some hours, he was unable to accompany him to his church, and seemed indeed scarcely equal to any conversation.

On the Sunday, one of the Cathedral clergy of Chester happened to be in church, having walked over from Romsey. He was struck and pleased, he said, by hearing the "Church in South Africa" prayed for specially in the Litany. "Persons in distress of mind" were also named for special intercession. After service, Mrs. Keble hospitably insisted on the stranger coming into the Vicarage for luncheon; and he did so, but kindly held back from conversation with the Vicar, observing with pain his pale and exhausted looks.

That Sunday evening *coze* (to borrow Mrs. Keble's favourite word) on the grass-plot, was a very sweet and happy one. I sat by the dear couple, not without a misgiving that it might be our last Sunday together

—for you might read in their faces, unmistakeably, that both were "wearing awa to the Land o' the leal;" but the thought brought no bitterness with it. Who would not wish the golden grain to be housed when it is ripe? who that had witnessed Mr. Keble's deep delight in the promise, "And sorrow and sighing shall flee away," as sung by sweet treble voices in Winchester Cathedral, could wish to keep him back from the Presence in which alone that hope can be realized? Selfish regret would have been out of place just then.

Before my return to my brother's home at Netley, Mrs. Keble had devised a bright little plan, which happily came to pass. She and Mr. Keble, with their two cousins, were to spend a day with us, and the young people were to visit the new Royal Victoria Hospital for soldiers.

Our trysting place was to be Netley Abbey. A few showers fell that morning, and cooled the air and brightened up the dusty ivy on the old arches, so they looked their best. Mrs. Keble had long wished to re-visit the ruins, for she and her husband had old associations with the spot. They had spent a day here before their marriage, and she related to me how she had wandered away from the rest of the party, and found a little brook flowing through the grass, but so choked with dead leaves at one point that its waters had no outlet. So she got a stick and set to work to remove the obstacle.

Mr. Keble had found her thus employed, and lent his help to set the captive water-nymph free. It was a pretty and characteristic act of hers. And here they were again, in the evening of life, together, and we left them to themselves, the young people climbing up the steeper parts of the ruin, and I resting below, and watching the bees going in and out of the great livid purple bells of the deadly-nightshade, extracting wholesome honey from a virulent poison. Mr. and Mrs. Keble presently joined me, and looked with interest at this remarkable shrub, which the former ascertained to be more than six feet high.

We went on to our destination, where Mr. and Mrs. Keble rested quietly after luncheon, while their young friends accompanied the commandant over the vast hospital. Their resting-place was on the lawn overlooking the Southampton water, which was divided from it only by a steep thicket of shrubs and dwarf oak. They much enjoyed the sight of the sparkling waves, and of the many vessels of all sizes and white-winged little yachts that dotted the river. Mr. Keble talked cheerfully with my brother for a time; then he took up, I recollect, a volume of Bonar's poems that lay there, and dipped into it, as his fashion was, specially singling out for approval the beautiful lines on "Divine Order." He also read, with attention and enjoyment, that striking poem, "The City," compar-

ing town and country life to the advantage of the former.

> "O'er the fields of earth lie scattered
> Noble fruitage and blossoms rare;
> Yon city the store has gathered,
> And the garner of hearts is there."

Mr. Keble put the book in my hand with an arch incredulous smile. "The lines are good," he said, "but they remind me a little of the dialogue between Johnson and Boswell in Greenwich Park. 'This is a fine view!' cried Johnson. 'Yes,' answered Boswell, 'but not equal to Fleet Street!' 'You are right, Sir,' rejoined Johnson." So the pleasant summer afternoon glided away, and towards evening they left us, with many loving farewells.

It was a comfort to hear, two days later, from her, "I don't think my husband was at all overtired by his day; indeed, he has been doing a little more since. Yesterday, his old friend, Sir John Awdry, came to have a coze, about the all-absorbing Gladstone election, first, then gradually floating into the less troubled stream of classics, as they used to do in Oxford—Homer and Eschylus and others. This came naturally from comparing the two Chancellors, and you may imagine how pleasant it was to listen to, while I pretended to be writing. Then, in the evening, came Mr. Butterfield, full of interesting talk, as he always is; but I

could not help fearing that even of this there might be a little too much."

Renewed illness soon clouded over this peaceful scene. Mrs. Keble's last letter from Hursley is written in a very trembling hand. "I am too weak for much—the attacks of spasm have come too often to give me time to get stronger, but I think of you, and your poor invalid, and like to know that you think of me and my dear husband, to whom this state of things is very trying, though, D. G., he is tolerably well. . . . . The days are so beautiful to look at, and our garden still bright with flowers, but I have only been out twice since we came from Bournemouth[1]."

Thither they returned for good in October; and in November she writes: "Dr. Gull's opinion that the heart is the chief cause of mischief is no surprise to me, and the rules he has laid down do not make much practical difference, as I have not had strength to walk upstairs since the cold weather began. One must make up one's mind to be somewhat more dependent and troublesome; but even this has its bright side." What a lesson of calm patience do these last words convey! "Loving thanks," she adds, "for the odorator, which

[1] In the autumn before Mr. Keble's death, Dr. Pusey published his Commentary on the Prophet Daniel. My sister well remembers Mr. Keble's coming into the room with a newly-received copy of the work under his arm. He thanked God (he said) that he had lived long enough to see that work happily completed!

arrived safely, and has contributed to refresh our rooms." The letter concludes thus: "I dare not begin writing of Dr. Pusey's 'Letter;' but I may tell you that though the Ultramontanes are very wroth with it, the Gallican Bishops, some of them, have expressed most kind approval, and asked him to have it translated into French. It makes one's heart glow to think how the yearning for union seems at once to stir the three great portions of the Church. With kindest love, and asking for your prayers, believe me, very dear friend, your ever affectionate C. K."

Thus close my recollections of Hursley Vicarage, and its dear inhabitants; and a few lines more will also close this feeble sketch, dear Helen; for though, through the great kindness of those who ministered in that sick-room, I had full and frequent details of what passed there, they are far too sacred to be written here.

In January, 1866, I had the great comfort, as well as surprise, of receiving a long letter from Mr. Keble. It related mainly to a matter of business connected with the spiritual welfare of his beloved Burton; but it also dwelt fully and tenderly on the sufferings and patience of his sinking wife.

So did several others which followed it; and in the last, written only eleven days before his peaceful de-

parture, and enclosing the Hursley offertory of more than £13 for our cattle-plague sufferers, are these most remarkable words: "My very dear Friend, our darling is still permitted to remain with us, but her weakness, and I much fear her suffering, increases—so, if possible, do her calmness and sweetness: I sit and look at her till I wonder how it ever can be that some whom I know are allowed to entertain a hope of being with such an one in the same home for ever. But we are taught to believe greater things than that; might we but be found worthy!" F. M. W.

THE FAIRFORD AND HURSLEY WINDOWS.

THREE hundred and seventy years ago, or somewhat more, a ship, on the way from Holland to Spain or Italy, was captured on the high seas by one John Tame, a London merchant.

Whether Sir John Tame were making war on the account of King Henry VII., or simply doing a little privateering business on his own score, is not clear: the latter is much to be apprehended, unless indeed there were authorized attacks upon vessels that might—

> "Back the cause of that mock prince—
> Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit."

However, it may be safer not to enquire too closely: people used not to be particular about such international trifles in those days.

When the cargo was brought into London, it proved to consist—not of garments rich and rare—nor gold—nor furs—but of a much more perishable material—namely, stained glass. The glass of Holland and Flanders was at that time greatly renowned, and partook of the great impulse that art of all kinds had received under the magnificent reign of Philip of Burgundy. John Tame, even if disappointed of treasure, knew that

his capture was a prize of no common order, and resolved that it should grace the church of his home.

His home was the old town of Fairford, in Gloucestershire—"a praty uplandish town" on the banks of the little river Colne, where he had of late established a flourishing wool trade.

There was, of course, an old church; but church and windows had to be adapted to one another, so John Tame pulled down all but the old Norman pillars supporting the tower, and entirely rebuilt it, so as to fit his much-prized glass.

Late Perpendicular was, of course, his fate; but he used the style with a grand simplicity and good taste.

The plan of the church was probably that of the old one; for it has a similarity to that of several adjacent Gloucestershire and Berkshire churches—a long three-aisled nave, and deep wide chancel, with a tower at the junction supported on huge pillars—a very grand and effective form of architecture. Fairford further is noticeable as having three aisles, the two side ones of which run out as far as the chancel; so that the three gables and their east windows are in a straight line with one another.

The good John Tame did not see his church completed; but it was finished by his nephew, Sir Edmund, who buried him and his wife under the arch between the chancel and the north aisle, beneath a beautiful and

powerfully-designed brass, giving the figures of the good gentleman and lady kneeling, with no word that the church owed its glory to them—only this humble entreaty:—

> "For JESUS' love pray for me.
> I may not pray: nowe pray ye
> With a Pater Noster and an Ave,
> That my paynis releasyd may be."

Sir Edmund lies under the chancel-floor: and his scroll, too, is all humility:—

> "JESUS Lord, that made us,
> And with Thy Blood us bought,
> Forgive us our trespasses."

The Tame family ended in an heiress; and the evil days of Will Dowsing threatened the Fairford windows; but they were saved by one William Oldysworth, who, when the republican army was on the march to Cirencester, took down the whole of the glass, and buried it, until better times came, when it was restored to the church in nearly all its glory: and it has only since suffered injury from one hail-storm early in the eighteenth century, and, alas! more recently from a much worse enemy—a glass cleaner and restorer, who has grievously injured two windows, and, we greatly fear, may be allowed to pursue his barbarous aud destructive career over the rest, ruining at once their majesty and their mystery.

Tradition declares that the windows were designed by Albert Durer: perhaps the date is too early, since the great Nuremburger was but twenty years of age at the time the glass was captured. Yet it is not improbable that even in his youth he might be employed in such designs; and the greater objection would be, that the glass was coming from Holland, not Germany. And yet Hollanders were apt to conduct the trade of all the world, and might have been employed, if not to paint, to transport, glass designed at Nuremburg, which would have been more perilled on the Alps than on the sea. On the whole, however, unromantic judges view the glass as most likely to be the work of one of those nameless but wonderful men, who did so much in the middle ages for the glory of God, and not of themselves.

Perhaps these were the "storied windows" of the *Penseroso;* and Vandyke is known to have often studied them, and spoken of them to the king.

When the stout merchant dedicated his spoil, he no doubt thought frankly of the honour of Him to Whom he gave of His own. He knew not that he was sowing a seed that three centuries and a half later would grow into a beauteous tree, shedding its pure fragrance and blessed fruit over thousands.

For it is impossible to stand in the light of the Fairford windows, without feeling that they were one of the living influences that moulded the mind of John Keble.

It is true that such a mind would have worked out paths of its own, and that the education bestowed on it would have determined much of its course; but the sense of continuity of doctrine and feeling—the finding that the cravings for beauty were satisfied by the Church—the reliance and contentment produced by the walking in an old unbroken path—all of which so remarkably characterized the man and his poetry—all were evidently fostered by the impressions produced by such a church as this.

The church is almost a comment on "The Christian Year;" more especially when it is remembered that the main idea of the arrangement was reproduced at Hursley, which in like manner is a three-aisled church, with three gables to the east end. Nor can anyone who is familiar with the book fail to see the connection of certain figures with the poems long endeared to them.

Both churches have their glass arranged according to what was, we believe, the true ecclesiastical system of symbolism—namely, with the Crucifixion over the altar, the Last Judgment at the extreme west, and the intermediate side-windows filled with single figures of Old Testament Saints on the north, and New Testament ones on the south, going on at Fairford to the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. At Hursley, the Saints who were concerned in the earliest council are placed, as builders up of the Church, opposite to David and

Solomon; and Philip and Nicodemus, the Baptizers, are close to the font.

At Fairford the three west windows are all expressive of Doom. In the south aisle window—that which suffered most from the before-mentioned hail—David is sentencing the Amalekite who brings him Saul's head; and on the corresponding north aisle window, Solomon sits in judgment; and there are also fragments of the career of Samson, including his betrayal. At Hursley these two windows are penitential, with Adam and Noah to the north, St. Peter and the Magdalene to the south. The Christian poet changed the Old Testament judgments into leadings to penitence.

The judgment in the great west window of Fairford is wonderful and fearful. The Saviour sits upon the rainbow, His feet on the earth, and a sword in one hand and a lily in the other, a blue circle around, crowded with souls coming to judgment. St. Michael with his scales stands below! and on the south side rise the golden-haired blest, on the north the accursed are carried away by demons.

The restorer has done his worst upon the upper part of the window, making the glass thin and weak, and the design appear grotesque. But the lower portion is untouched; and no words can do justice to the effect of the gold and white of the one half of the window, in contrast with the "lurid light" of the other. It repre-

sents an enormous mouth, and is one glare of blood red, enhanced by the purple scaly figures of the demons, some violet, some lilac, but all in wonderful keeping with the crimson round them. We saw the window at midday, but the effect with a western sun must be marvellous.

One little circle of glass, about the size of the stand of a wine-glass, is memorable for colour. It is in the dress of one of the Jewish doctors who attend on Solomon, in the west window of the north aisle. It is a glow of ruby, with smaller white knobs, and the brightness of the combination is something extraordinary; but in general, the sparing and therefore most effective use of colour is remarkable. It is like the tints of our birds, sober and rich; the chief portion of the figures are in grisaille, of a rich ruddy grey or brown, of an infinite variety of tone, and only here and there a piece of deep red or blue. If we called it gentianella blue, a flaring blue silk dress would rise before the imaginations of our readers; but we mean the blue of the real flower, the rich dark brightness of which is confined to the expanded part of the corolla, the bell or throat being of subdued tints of grey, white, and green. Such red and such blue are seldom to be seen—never in a *restored* window. This glass, we should have said, is not a mosaic of separate coloured pieces, but was first painted with the design, and the colours then burnt in.

The countenances of the Apostles and prophets in the four windows on either side of the church are very noble. Hosea is perhaps the grandest of all; and St. John, with his dragon in the chalice, the most beautiful. Above, in the clerestory, are little figures of the persecutors of the Church on the north; such as Herod with an infant pendent in his hand, Nero with a red face, Domitian, &c., and with purple and red demons in the small intervals between the tracery above their heads. The preservers are on the south side, and are St. Sebastian and other saints, with angels over their heads.

Within the chancel the designs are narrative. The central window seemed to us the least successful; and Sir John could not so accommodate his glass, but that Pilate washing his hands is the most prominent figure. There is one window high up in the south wall of the chancel, which may be called an Easter Eve window. It has the Descent from the Cross, the Mater Dolorosa, and the subdual of Beelzebub, whose terrific countenance glares from behind a fiery grate, in blood-red shaded off into flame. The extreme east of the south aisle is full of the glories of our Lord; the Transfiguration is in the centre; the Head of the principal Figure is broken away, but there are three grand rays of light proceeding from the breast of the white garment. There, too, in another light of the same window, is the scene,

"when the holy Maid beheld her risen Son and Lord;" and the other lights have the appearances to St. Mary Magdalene and the other women.

The Resurrection subject is continued in the other two four-light windows, at right angles with this, and culminates in the Ascension, which takes place from off a tall pillar of rock, crowned with turf bearing the print of the two Feet, which can just be seen below the cloud. The adoring heads of the Apostles are arranged in a semicircle round the base of the rock; and in the background is a wonderful landscape with water, on which are swans and ships.

The corresponding windows on the north side have the scenes connected with the Nativity—beginning from the old traditional representations of the birth of the Blessed Virgin, her dedication, and then, after the Annunciation, her marriage to Joseph—the Nativity, the Epiphany, the Circumcision, Presentation, Flight into Egypt, and the Teaching the Doctors in the Temple, with the Assumption in the light answering to that occupied by the Transfiguration.

The Hursley windows have not space to follow all this out, even if it had been desirable; but the idea is still so far followed that the north aisle has for its eastern window the Circumcision, but with Simeon and Anna in the side lights, so as to carry on the thought to the Presentation; and the Resurrection occupies the east

window of the south aisle. The chancel south window has John the Baptist; and the solemnity and pure delicate tints of the solemn subject over the altar must be seen to be understood.

No one can look at the two churches without seeing that the one helped to mould the mind that imagined the other; and that the thoughts that thus, as it were, crystallized their outer manifestation, were infinitely wider and deeper than those that could mould themselves in architecture.

Mr. Keble was, however, no less the poet of sanctified home affections and "homely scenes and simple views," than of the Church. And thus no one can fail to look with exceeding interest on the rich green meadow-lands, and clear streams shaded with pollard-willows bursting out in grey or sea-green foliage—the "quiet brooklets" and cheerful willows that have taught us "contentment's power"—while listening to the nightingales singing in every hedge-row.

As we walked through the clean wide-streeted quiet little town, with its wide market-place, and saw the unpretending home of the Keble family—a house within a walled garden, built of the soft light grey stone of the country—and saw the tall elms with their rooks' nests, and the green rich grass of the little shady paddock—we felt that this little remote town, and simple peaceful

English home, were meet nurses for one who has done much to give us the power to enter into

> "The secret lore of rural things,
> The moral of each fleeting cloud and gale,
> The whispers from above that haunt the twilight vale;

looking beyond, above, and deep into, all the fair things of earth, and reading in them all parables of the better things to come.

"My lines are in pleasant places," might indeed be said by the dweller in the meadows of Fairford, and among the downs and woods of Hursley; and yet withal there is an unaspiring fairness about each. Neither possesses scenery such as to attract strangers from a distance, but both have that which keeps the affections of the inhabitants; and in each, nature not appearing in her grander features, the church is the prime glory and beauty of the place, reigning over, and bringing into harmony and keeping, the adjacent portions of the landscape.

Is not this likewise the case with the poetry, and one secret of its great charm — that one key-note runs through all?

"Quanto men si mostra, tanto è più bella."

It is not an easy task to describe, as I have been asked to do, the appearance of one of whom it may with truth be said that the outward man was "but the ambassador of a most fair mind." Yet it is a satisfaction, though now a sad one, to know that this little sketch was not distasteful to one of his nearest and dearest, Mrs. Thomas Keble, whose dear and holy memory the writer would fain unite to these few lines. It was read to her the week before she was called to join those whose last hours she had so tenderly watched and who seemed ever present to her thoughts, and while saying that it would be impossible for those nearest to her Brother to write of him, she expressed her feeling that it was right that some such sketch should be drawn, saying she had often wished to know more of Bishop Ken's outward bearing and ways, and that we should value any words of the kind relating to George Herbert, although personally she could not help shrinking from sketches of the private life of those whose characteristic it was to withdraw themselves as far as possible from public notice, and to live all their days in a quiet shade.

Mr. Keble was of middle height, the shoulders not

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rounded, and in fact almost square, but extremely low, which made him look shorter than he was, his arms very long and all his limbs looking as if they were somewhat loosely hung.

His head, forehead, eyes and hair, were fine even as to outward appearance, the head exquisitely formed, very straight behind, and covered with perfectly white hair, soft and thick; the forehead *very* broad, strong and smooth, with a certain tender softness in the skin almost like that of a child's forehead—the eyes hazel, and beautifully shaped, but it is impossible to describe them, or the rich depth of their colour and light. They used to shine like no other eyes, at times also flashing (the chief outward note in him of anger), and at others sparkling with pleasure or humour. The circle round the pupil, which is seen in old men, was very marked. Mr. Richmond's picture gives some idea of the shining gleam in his eyes; when his face was in repose they had a soft and almost pensive expression, but they were straighter than in that picture, not so much rounded in the upper edge. He was very short-sighted, but within its range his sight was perfect to the last; and never were eyes more tried; he had a fashion of reading in the dusk, standing at the window and holding up the book to catch the last evening light. Mr. Richmond's sketch gives the softness and poetry of his eyes, but he seems to have partly failed in expressing their power and

strength. The eyebrows were thick and grizzled, not bushy exactly; his face was closely shaven. His mouth was large and rather unshapely, but any want of beauty of form was redeemed by its wonderful play and change of expression, the sensitive lips answering to every touch of emotion. If much moved, he seemed to try to controul the expression of his face, but to be unable to do so. The first impression which recurs to my mind of his whole person and air is that of a most singular simplicity and artlessness. He had a rather hurried and careless walk, stooping his head forwards a good deal, and not lifting his feet well from the ground, so that of late years at least he was very apt to stumble against anything in his way, or in going up and down cottage stairs, &c., and more than once he hurt himself a good deal by these falls. He always seemed to prefer standing to sitting, especially if talking of anything that interested him; at such times he had a way of rubbing his hands one over the other, as if in the act of washing them. All who knew him well must remember his peculiar way and gestures when "looking over" a book, or as one calls it, "his way of sniffing the sense out of it with a rapidity which always seemed more like a mouse running over the page than reading." He used to seize it in a hurried jerking way, with another hasty jerk push up his spectacles on his forehead, and then hold the book almost *into* his face, as though the nose

were at least to take a part (if not the chief part) in the investigation. Then, having first rapidly sniffed at the back, sides, and ends of the outside, he would turn over the leaves, and in an incredibly short time look up and make some remark with perfect simplicity, which would have come almost absurdly from any one else; such as, "I don't see *a single word* in St. —— to support such a view." While at the same time he had ears for any talk that was going on in the room, and would join in with one of his trenchant remarks, commendatory or the reverse. If moved or grieved he always put his hand quickly up to his forehead and passed it over it; also at family prayers, during the few words of Bishop Wilson's to be said standing, he generally put his hand so that it shaded his eyes. He used this gesture especially if hearing of anything wrong; his whole way at such times was as though *he* were the person in fault, recalling vividly the words which he puts into the mouth of the Church :—

> "I with boding anguish read
> Half your tale e'er ye begin,
> Bitter drops in heart I bleed,
> Penance for your shame and sin."

Once, when a friend was about to read to him the daily prayers used by a poor Italian woman, he put up his hand in this way, then hurriedly and shyly pulled over

a low chair and knelt on it, as if only in that position he could bear to listen. He also often knelt in order to bring his eyes near his book or writing, if only occupied with them for a few minutes, but his favourite posture for reading was standing, holding the book near his eyes; he was almost always to be found in the parlour before breakfast, standing about whilst the servant laid the table, a side-table covered with books, one and another of which he carried to the window or the fire, and stood reading. There was generally something shy and retiring in his gestures, as if he would like to withdraw himself altogether from sight. And yet his countenance and air were oftentimes so radiant that almost all were sooner or later impressed by it, seeing his face bright with—

> "Pure gladness found in temperance high,
> In duty owned, and reverenced with awe;"

even those who had not submitted themselves to that law of duty perceived this, and in his presence at least felt the sweetness, as well as strength of sanctity.

Two memories are especially vivid,—one of his figure when on summer evenings he paced up and down the steep path between his parlour window and the churchyard-gate with a book in his hand, his white hair shewing under his college cap, the moon rising behind the cedar on the garden lawn. The other picture is in

church—the flowing lines of the surplice concealing his figure, so that the eye was drawn chiefly to his snowy head, the movements of which were always noble and striking.

He always used Bishop Wilson's Family Prayers, as (I am told) his father had done: the way in which he clung to any old ways of his father was one of the most remarkable things about him. One of his greatest pleasures seemed to be in seeing or receiving at his house any who had known him, or his mother, or the young sister who died, even though they might not be people with whom otherwise he would have much in common.

The highest praise which he seemed able to give to any theological statement was, "It seems to me just what my father taught me." I cannot refrain from mentioning here the deep regret expressed by his sister-in-law at the wrong impression which had been conveyed (by Dr. Newman's letter in Sir John Coleridge's Memoir) as to his feelings about the proposed disestablishment and spoliation of the Irish Church. It may be remembered that, writing of his conversation on this subject with Mr. Keble, Dr. Newman says, "I *cannot remember* his exact words, but *I took them to be*, 'And is not that just?'" Mrs. Keble said that, knowing his mind most intimately, she *knew* that the impression this would convey was untrue, that even supposing the words quoted were said by him (which from Dr. Newman's

letter seems doubtful), she knew that he used them in the sense of "is it not a deserved chastisement?" (as, e.g. Nehemiah confesses, "Howbeit Thou art just in all that is brought upon us,") that he *never* could have taken part in the Irish Church Act. I cannot say how strongly she expressed the certainty of *knowing* that this was the case, or her regret that passing words, not exactly remembered, should have given a wrong impression to the public as to his feelings on so important a matter. He ever held and taught to the end what he had received from his father's teaching—that to take from God or His Church that which had in any way been consecrated to Him, was sacrilege; and his poems in the *Lyra Apostolica* would alone shew that he did not think less of this sin because it was *national*. There is a note to a poem by him in that book headed "Sacrilege," which mentions that it was "written March 25, 1833, whilst the Irish Church Bill was in progress;" and another poem by him in the same volume, headed "Spoliation," contains these lines:—

"But sadder strains and direr bodings dark
Come haunting round th' Almighty's captive ark;
By proud Philistian hosts beset,
With axe and dagger newly whet,
To hew the holy gold away
And seize their portion as they may.

* * * * *

Oh would my country once believe,
But once her contrite bosom heave,

And but in wish or vow restore
But one fair shrine despoiled of yore."

Mr. Keble did not so depart from the convictions and teaching of his whole life as to call sacrilegious spoliation a "just" or righteous act.

Perhaps the following picture, by one who knew him well, may be given here :—

"The image which is stamped on one's memory is entirely that of the latter years of his life.

"His head was, as long as I can remember, to some degree, and latterly very much, bowed forward; though from the shoulders downwards I think he never lost his uprightness; and he had a habit of drawing his head briskly up, and pulling down his shoulders by a sudden impulse, as a child might do, who was told to 'sit up.' His movements were always quick and full of life; dangerously so in his latter years, when partly from short sight, partly from feebleness and a nervous uncertainty of step and movement, he had several bad falls. In his face there was an ever-changing variety, from the tenderest sweetness to the most indignant fire. His eyes were wonderfully beautiful—his habit of always wearing spectacles prevented their being well seen; latterly he wore them less, and then one got to know his eyes better. His fine forehead, too, came out much more of late years, when the hair retreated more, though there was never any approach to baldness."

Another, who knew him still more intimately, writes :— "I see in recollection far more the face and figure of about twenty-six years ago—when first as a little child I began to understand that he was some one out of the common—than that of his old age. In those days long ago he was particularly upright (latterly his head was much bent forward), his figure compact but his motions rather awkward, his arms and legs moving in a jerky manner. He was a good and fast walker; when first I remember him he used often to ride, but not, I think, for many years before his death; his extreme short sight made Mrs. Keble nervous about him if he either rode or drove by himself. His hair used to be nearly black but latterly was perfectly white, notwithstanding which I think he always looked younger than he was, especially when between fifty and sixty. I cannot describe his face; taking the features by themselves they were those of a plain man, and his nose was a little disfigured from an accident he met with between twenty and thirty years ago—slightly scarred and swollen—the mouth large, the eyes, deeply set under long eyebrows, wonderfully bright and piercing. The extreme sweetness with which he generally looked at one was, I think, mostly in the mouth; the sternness, for he sometimes looked very stern, in the eyes chiefly. When he laughed it was with his whole face, and very gleefully, but I do not think he was much given to laughter; his smile was

wonderfully sweet, there is no other word for it. When walking about his parish, if he had not a book, his arms swung at his side; but lounging in his garden, talking, as he would do on summer evenings, or sometimes for a few minutes with his curate after morning church, his hands were almost always clasped behind his back. He had a way of drawing himself up and throwing back his head and shoulders, when in conversation, especially when anything was said or spoken which roused his indignation or made him at all angry. His hands were seldom still when talking—if he had nothing in them he would pass them over each other perpetually."

There was something in his ways and bearing as if he had preserved to the last a certain boyishness, something that made you feel he could never have altered very much. And yet few can have used more habitual self-restraint, and self-discipline. She who of all then living knew him best, expressed her belief that the humility and self-distrust which have been so much dwelt upon in late notices of him, far from resulting from any natural timidity or backwardness, were the result of the watchful guard kept on himself, lest his extreme natural eagerness should lead to self-confidence. She spoke of how she had seen the lowly self-distrust year by year increase, the guard kept closer on a naturally eager and impetuous spirit, to which, with its clearness of mental vision, the natural temptation was rather

to feel an over-certainty, than any hesitancy as to advice to be given, &c. Perhaps it may have been different during the period of perplexity consequent on the troubles of the Church, touchingly described by Sir John Coleridge in his Memoir; disturbed and troubled himself, he may have advised others with hesitation, but those too young to have known much of his mind at that time, can but speak of what they knew, of the impression received of undoubting adherence on his part to this branch of the Church, and of a strong anti-Roman feeling, that is, in the sense of a deep grief for, and opposition to, the corruptions and unhistorical claims, which he believed hindered, (no less than faults on our side,) the re-union of Christians for which he chiefly longed and prayed. Certainly a letter* lately republished, but written during that period of trouble, (in 1844,) ought not to be taken as the expression of his deliberate mind in later years. He always took a deep interest in accounts brought to him by friends of religious matters abroad; and possibly the state of things practically amongst those on whom confession is obligatory, may have to some extent comforted him as to his own parishioners, whose faults and deficiencies he was ever wont to lay at his own door. Whether this be so or not, those taught by him in his old age will know how far he was from letting them feel that he either expected

* Letter XIX. in "Letters of Spiritual Counsel."

confession, or even wished it to be used unless the need for it were felt, and that he expressed disagreement with the teaching of the "advanced" school on this subject, speaking strongly of the unreality to which he thought it had given occasion.

Almost all his friends will feel that they never knew one in whom the grace of having "become as a little child" shone forth so brightly; I suppose no thoughtful person could be long in his company without being constantly reminded of those words of our Lord. In one of his last Sermons in 1864, he said, speaking of the Gospel for the day (the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity), "I am going to say what may seem strange to some—and yet I must say it; it is that when I think of those words of our Lord, 'Take no thought,' three times repeated in the Gospel for to-day, they sound to me like the burden of a nursery song, wherewith our Lord would soothe His little ones to rest."

And as in soul, so in mind; with all his acute intellect and exact scholarship, lighted up as they were by real genius, he ever seemed to turn naturally to the most childlike way of looking at things, to adopt the simplest modes of expression, to be haunted by nursery rhymes and hymns of boyhood. In the Preface to "Kenilworth," Sir Walter Scott says: "There is a period in youth, when the mere power of numbers has a more strong effect on ear and imagination than

in after life;" and perhaps this may be the reason that the music of old familiar strains seemed always the most welcome to Mr. Keble, and that he turned most naturally to them for teaching or comfort. As in youth, doubtless,—

> "Amid the strings his fingers strayed,
> And an uncertain warbling made,"

before he caught his own true measure; so in old age, from time to time a few faint sweet notes were struck. Some playful lines, feebly traced in pencil, which, as he bade his wife write, "had come into his head during the first days of his illness," were the first token sent to a friend of returning power to his hand after the slight stroke in 1864, which was the first warning that soon we must lose him.

He specially loved and made use of Bishop Ken's "Morning and Evening Hymns:" he once mentioned to a friend his having found it a useful practice to use the "Morning Hymn" for self-examination, saying the verses over at night, and thinking how far they had been acted on during the day. But in truth all most sacred memories connected with him are untold, and will remain untold—the glimpses gained in spite of himself into his inner life and habits of communion with his God. In many late memoirs (especially foreign) of holy men, their whole inner life is as far as possible laid bare, all the practices of devotion, &c., detailed by which their

spiritual life was fed. Such pictures may be useful and edifying, but the feeling is also at least natural which forbids us to follow our saints when they have entered into their innermost chamber. It has been said of our more reserved memoirs, "how different are these your pictures of English saints from ours;" it would no longer be said if the veil of the sick room were withdrawn.

The last book which he had in his hand was Sir Roundell Palmer's "Book of Praise;" he could not remember all the verses of Bishop Ken's "Evening Hymn," which he was wont to say in the night-watches by his wife, and this book, which contains the whole hymn, was sent for. And so he sank as a child to rest, lulled by the hymns of childhood; leaving to us (to use his own words) "the contemplation with assured hope of a soul so remarkable for a clear and noble Christian simplicity, passing into that region of peace where all is pure, noble, simple, and Christian, and welcomed thither by myriads of kindred spirits," welcomed (can we doubt it?) by that serene band who, nobly gifted here, used their gifts nobly, and now—

> "In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
> That sing, and singing, in their glory move."

M. T.

A FEW WORDS OF PERSONAL DESCRIPTION,

By the Rev. T. Simpson Evans, Plumstead Common.

My acquaintance with Mr. Keble was the result of the state of the Hall at which I was at Oxford. My kind uncle, who placed me there, knew neither the condition of the school, nor the character of the society, in which he placed me. He studied only economy, and, I fear, a very false economy. My father on his death-bed had charged me to take care of my mother and brothers. I was only nineteen, and felt that my only hope of doing my duty in this respect was by gaining some distinction at my examination, of which, however, I had no reasonable hope without assistance. It is true I had been well grounded in a knowledge of Greek and Latin before my entering the University; but this was only a small matter. I had much to learn before I could compete with my fellow-students. My uncle at length became aware of this his blunder, and did his best to remedy it. He called on Mr. Keble, and stated my difficulties, and Mr. Keble generously undertook to be my private tutor: I say "generously," for eventually he would accept of no remuneration. In due time I called on my instructor, and found him, as Sir J. Cole-

ridge has represented him, the most humble-minded man I had ever seen; so humble, that I think he was far more abashed at me, than I at him. Humble, however, as he was, I had soon reason to feel his power, and judge who had most cause to be humble. The lecture was on the Rhetoric of Aristotle, and I went every morning at six, the most convenient hour for Mr. K., amidst his College and public duties. He had no book, nor did he need one, for he knew all by heart, and had only to ask at beginning, "Where did we leave off?" Now and then he was a little late, and his general reflection was, "how soon we habituate ourselves to acquiesce in neglect." More than once he asked me if I was fond of poetry, when he acknowledged his fondness by saying that to him, after the fatigues of public examining, a volume of poetry was like a bath. One day I found him in admiration of a fine large copy of nearly a full-length portrait of Jeremy Taylor, which had, I believe, been given him by a Fellow of All Souls, where the original hangs, which, I think, was reduced and engraved for Heber's edition of Jeremy Taylor's works. Mr. K. said jokingly, "I have been wasting my time all yesterday worshipping this."

As I intended going into Holy Orders, I consulted him with much care what books I should read preparatory to it. He recommended these, and in the order he gave them —1. Butler's "Analogy." 2. Pearson "On the

Creed," and 3. Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity;" and I have read them through and through ever since. Among other books which he recommended or spoke of with pleasure, I may name Andrewes' "Devotions," Walton's "Lives," Quesnel "On the New Testament," and I think, Kay "On the Articles." I ought not to omit, that he strongly recommended me to make myself acquainted with Hebrew, which, I think he said, every clergyman should know. He himself had a considerable knowledge of it, as he evinced by his accurate version of the Psalms. Perhaps I may be pardoned for mentioning, we undergraduates used to think him, for a little man, which he was, a very well-made man. It was the fashion then for men to wear tight pantaloons, which shewed the figure. He also played a very good knife and fork at table, though always a most temperate man, shewing that hunger attends labour of mind as well as of body. I write now from memory, and regret that I did not take fuller and earlier notes.

MUSINGS

OVER

THE "CHRISTIAN YEAR," &c.

MUSINGS OVER THE "CHRISTIAN YEAR" AND "LYRA INNOCENTIUM."

TO unwind all the harmony of the poems in the "Christian Year" and "Lyra Innocentium," to explain all their difficulties, would be to penetrate into the deepest thoughts of a saint, a poet, a scholar, and a pastor, when stirred by the strongest feelings both of Christian and of man. This, therefore, the ensuing papers do not presume to attempt; but it is possible that there may be a few difficulties in arrangement and allusion that these humble annotations may diminish.

The Morning and Evening Hymns.

THESE Musings, as I have called them for want of a better name, would not be complete without a mention of the Morning and Evening Hymns, and yet there is not much to dwell on as requiring any kind of elucidation in either, while for this reason they are all the more loved. It may generally be taken as a rule in these annotations—if they may so be called—that where

there is least said about a poem it is one of the most dear and beautiful.

Thus the Morning Hymn, after the joyous description of sunrise, is a realization of how we may walk day by day in newness of life, and how the old becomes more and more dear for the new radiance continually shining on it. The choice of verses for singing in the "Salisbury Hymnal" being probably the author's own, is far better than the selection of verses for singing in "Hymns Ancient and Modern." We suppose that the especial popularity of the verse, "The trivial round," &c., must have made the compilers bring it in, without the verse it properly completes, and with an alteration, "need to" for "ought to," which is hardly good English. In fact, the poem is perfect as a morning meditation, but is forced out of its use when sung like a hymn of praise. We believe, too, that there is a tendency to think that the verse—

> "We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
> Our neighbour and our work farewell,

and the ensuing one about "the trivial round," cast a slur upon the "religious life," which they were far from doing. Putting out of the question that the "cloister'd cell" was unattainable in the Church of England in 1827, the two verses are a lesson that, for those to whom the higher way was not open, ordinary life would furnish

all the training in self-sacrifice that could be desired. No doubt it opened the minds of many to the sense that this was both a possible duty and a high privilege, and the revival of the more openly devoted life is in great probability due to such a beginning. Probably, when the two lines were written,—

> "Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
> For sinful man beneath the sky,"

the thought was that such opportunities not being vouchsafed, was a token that the generation was not fit for them; and verily it was so, for even in Roman Catholic countries, what had not the contemplative orders come to before their terrible trials, and their present growth, often in the midst of distress?

The Evening poem, being after the first two stanzas an invocation, is far more really a hymn, and much more constantly so used. The three verses that follow "Sun of my soul" being missed out, may, we fear, become less familiar than they should be, expressing, as they do, the needs of a cultivated, not an uncultivated mind. For their prayer is, that our delight in the beauty of nature, in study and in friendship, may be sanctified by owning and feeling our Lord's power and presence in all. The intercessions—following the course of those in the Litany—are perhaps some of the most lovely and most loved lines in the "Chris-

tian Year." Whose heart has not found voice in those two touching lines—

> "Be every mourner's sleep to-night
> Like infants' slumbers, pure and light."

There is something calm and hushing in the very rhythm.

Three exquisite hymns were written—for Midnight, Morning, and Evening—for a little book of "Devotions for Emigrants," published by Groombridge for the Emigration Office. They appeared in the first edition, and then, without information or explanation to the author, were suppressed. Happily they are now in the "Miscellaneous Poems," and their sweet notes will surely soothe many a spirit. The Midnight Hymn is on our Lord's sleep in the ship:—

> "Thou seem'st to sleep that we may pray,
> Full deeply dost Thou hide;
> Forgotten through the calm clear day,
> Nor own'd at even-tide.
>
> "But when the darksome gales begin,
> The rude waves urge their race,
> Man, startled from his sloth and sin,
> Seeks out Thine hiding-place.
>
> "Well if we pray till Thou awake!
> One word, one breath of Thee
> Soft silence in the heart will make,
> Calm peace upon the sea."

The Morning has, however, one of the most royally beautiful of all the poet's strains, and one which we believe is superior even to the opening poem of the "Christian Year." What a picture is the first verse :—

> "Slowly the gleaming stars retire,
> The eastern heaven is all on fire ;
> The waves have felt the unrisen sun,
> Their matin service is begun !"

The *text* of the poem is the Apostle's walking on the water to go to Jesus, and so the prayer is that the whole voyage may be going to Him, while

> "Still overhead the saving Sign
> Streams, and we know that we are Thine.
> What course soe'er the vessel take,
> The signal of our King we make.
>
> "It hallows air and wave : and lo !
> The heavens a glorious answer shew.
> High and more high through southern skies
> We see the unmoving Cross arise."

The Evening Hymn begins with homeward yearning,—

> "The twilight hour is sweet at home,
> Where sounds from brook and woodland come,
> Or old familiar bells, that bring
> The memories grave of many a spring ;"

and with those thoughts come the evening prayer, in the assurance that when we walk through the waters He is

with us, brought home to us by "our everlasting creed," and moreover that

> "We say the Prayer our Saviour taught,
> As household words with homely thought;
> But angels bear it on and on
> In all its meaning, to the Throne.
>
> "The frailest bark that ploughs the main,
> The simplest child may raise the strain;
> Heaven, earth, air, seas, will hear the call,
> 'Our Father' harmonizing all.
>
> "But, O, that to Thy Prayer and Creed
> Thine high Commands we join'd indeed,
> Written in heart, on hand engraven;—
> Three seals in one of grace and Heaven."

These three carry further out, and into more detail, the substance of the "Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea," which dwells on the presence of the Church to comfort in death or danger far away on the sea.

Would that the provisions the Church has made were more efficiently carried out.

Advent Sunday.

It is curious to contrast the two poems of this day—the bright terse simplicity and hopefulness of the old man's verse, with the stern trumpet-call of the youthful warrior, girding on his armour for the great battle of thirty years.

To enter into the spirit of the awakening summons of the "Christian Year," we must think of ourselves as dwellers in the city of Jerusalem—as the Church on earth is so often called—the true kingdom and inheritance of Christ, but full of corruption, and awaiting His second coming, as Jerusalem of old awaited His first.

Year by year the summons becomes louder and plainer.

"Strange words fulfilled and mighty works achieved,"

mark His approach, as the accomplishment of prophecy marked His first coming long ago. The call that might have awakened His Jewish disciples to go forth, hail Him, and openly enlist themselves as His disciples, peals out in the second verse to us,

"Sworn liegemen of the Cross and thorny Crown."

Our "gorgeous town" is that mixture of worldliness and Christianity which only too much resembles the Jerusalem of the Scribes and Pharisees. Going forth to meet Him is surely rousing ourselves to true sacrifice, taking His side in some manner that is neither easy nor popular, offering that which costs us something. His true disciples need no such call—long ago they from every age past have chosen their part; and each one of us must in our own hearts seek whether to us the terrible reproach applies—

"All but your hearts are there—O doom'd to prove
The arrows wing'd in Heaven for Faith that will not love!"

The parallel is carried on between the Jerusalem of

old, and the Jerusalem that has existed and has ever been Christ's Kingdom, to which He has been ever "coming," ever since it was set up on earth—ever visiting and trying His people—ever coming, yet ever present. The picture is described of the original triumphal entry, the fickle faithless multitude, among whom the Lord passes on in His calm majesty, turning His benignant looks upon the faithful few—Bartimeus' humble prayer at the gates of Jericho, the children who cried Hosanna, Lazarus, and his sisters, the representatives of zeal and contemplation.

So in the Church of all ages, with every error that has sprung up, through all the many corruptions that have stained her almost from the first, there has never been a time when the faithful have been entirely wanting, or when the Saviour's Eye has not had some true and holy hearts to dwell on.

Three of these "soft green isles" are given. The first is in the fourth century, when the Empire professed Christianity, but was grievously tainted by Arianism, which was even fostered by the Imperial family. It was a time of glaring luxury and corruption and decay throughout the Roman Empire, and may well recall those last days of Jerusalem. Then it was that the great, learned, and fervent Jerome repaired to Bethlehem, and there dwelt in a hermitage close to the cave regarded as the place of the Nativity, where he deeply studied the Scriptures, brought all his learning to bear

upon them, bravely defended the truth, and cheered and fostered the devout in all lands by his earnest love and zealous faith.

> "Then to his early home did Love repair
> And cheer'd his sickening heart with his own native air."

The foul cruelty and barbarism of the Middle Ages find their "soft green isle" in the pilgrim monarch, St. Louis, "like some bright angel."

Lastly, the seventeenth century is called up before us, the "light without love," when religious controversy was raging among the Puritans, Presbyterians, and Nonconformists of all shades, and the study of the Scriptures was universal, in too many cases without learning, love, or obedience; and here the quiet calm holy lives depicted by Izaak Walton, namely, the gentle pastor and poet George Herbert, the learned Hooker, the wise Donne, and the devout Sanderson, all following their peaceful course, through all the rude tumultuary quarrels around them.

Multitudes of other instances might have been given, but these mark sufficiently how the worst times have never been devoid of faithful disciples awaiting their Lord. "Bad and good give their several warnings" that these are the last days. Faith, that hopes for the coming of her Lord,

> "Counts them like minute-bells at night;"

but how will it be with those who cling to this world's delights, and deafen their ears to every warning that might waken them in time to be on the Lord's side?

"Lord, ere our trembling lamps sink down and die,
Touch us with chastening hand, and make us feel Thee nigh."

Turn now to the Advent of the *Lyra*. There again the Jerusalem stands in thought for the Church; but there is a bright hopefulness in the comparison of the winter buds beneath the withered leaves, to the little children crying, "Hosanna!" while "Priest and Scribe looked on and frowned." Who has not felt that in the children lies the hope of the future?

All the four Advent hymns in the *Lyra* belong to its *first* intention to be "a sort of 'Christian Year' for teachers and nurses." Therefore they are very brief, very simple, but like nothing so much as an "arrow in the hand of a giant," feathered and polished gracefully, but with a keen, piercing, and weighty point, that sinks deep and can never be forgotten.

Second Sunday in Advent.

THESE two hymns are on the same Gospel—how different they are in substance, yet how the one illustrates the other! The first is all awe and gravity, the second all blitheness and joy. The first is the young man's admonition to himself, the second is the old man's song

for little children, unconsciously fulfilling the precept of its predecessor.

Winter is pictured in the first verse of the "Christian Year"—winter as it is in December, ere the promise of spring dare shew itself; and then the question is put, why in times of danger and despondency should the Church look up and lift up her head? And when, more than twenty years later, the *Lyra Innocentium* was composed, assuredly times were darker still, dangers more threatening, unbelief smouldering more evidently, supporters falling away—yet what is the subject? "Vernal Mirth!" The four stanzas have no mournful line;

> "What is the joy the young lambs know?"

they begin, and after twelve sunshiny lines comes the moral,—

> "Be thou through life a little child;
> By manhood undefiled;
> So shall no Angel grudge thy dreams
> Of fragrance pure and ever brightening beams."

The man who had written from his heart and acted on the grave exhortation of the "Christian Year," had been "through life a little child," had been carried on with the spirit of the Church, and thus, even in the sadder and later times, he himself was aiding her to lift her head, and singing her rejoicing notes, inspired by her "word of fire, her pledge of love that cannot tire."

To such as with St. John can say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," the dread signs of the times are as precious a promise as the buds or gems (*gemma* in Latin) that lie in the bark of the tree are to those who hope for summer charms. But how comes the grave warning to those who heed no tokens, and keep out of sight that to them at least the end can be no further off than their own death, and forget that "Behold the Judge standeth at the door?"

Then, awfully and practically, that Presence is set before us:—

> "Hush, idle words, and thoughts of ill,
> Your Lord is listening: peace, be still.
> Christ watches by a Christian's hearth,
> Be silent, 'vain deluding mirth,'
> Till in thine alter'd voice be known
> Somewhat of Resignation's tone."

Mirth is not to be silent altogether, but her tone is to be qualified by resignation, and by the sense that Christ is listening. It is like a paraphrase of the Epistle of two Sundays later, the preparation for the Christmas festivity. "Rejoice evermore, and again I say unto you, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." At hand—whether in the sense of being close to us, and attentive to our words, or as being soon to come to judgment. If in that temper—rejoicing *because* the Lord is benignly taking part in our

joy, and because we shall soon see His face for ever; but rejoicing with moderation because He hears us, and because the end of all things is at hand—we spend our youth, assuredly we shall sing with vernal mirth in our latter days—for "the bright fields beyond the sky" will then have become all the nearer and the clearer from the "world's uncertain haze."

Third Sunday in Advent.

We believe that Mr. Keble only once was on the Continent, and that later in life than the writing of either of these two works; but he had a wonderful power of realizing scenery, and might have been taken as an illustration of Lord Lytton's curious assertion in the preface to his "Strange Story," that it is in the power of imagination to call up before it places unseen but described, so as to picture them vividly in words to other auditors. Whether he would not have shrunk, if the opportunity had been set before him, from "tearing away the veil," and actually visiting the holy places, we cannot tell; but he certainly dwelt upon such descriptions and illustrations as fell in his way with ardent love and a wonderful power of distinct mental vision, to which Dean Stanley has borne witness in his "Palestine."

This poem, and that for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity, stand out as the most descriptive of all, and this one remarkably embodies his yearning towards the

sacred East, and we fully believe has done much for the spirit in which travellers go through that great test and trial, a visit to Jerusalem in her present fallen state. Mr. Trollope himself, in his novel of "The Bertrams," has drawn a deep and painful picture of the effect of such a pilgrimage—of the elevation and lofty aims that were produced by the gazing from the Mount of Olives, but dimmed to the degradation of the whole after life, by the frivolous worldly response of a woman of shallow heart and irreverent mind! And the Crusaders of old were great saints—or else grievous sinners.

A case has come to our knowledge of an English clergyman, who, when staying at Jerusalem, was grieved and pained by the scoffing tone of unbelief with which an American was discussing the scenes of Palestine. After a remonstrance, he lent the traveller his "Christian Year." It was retained during the remainder of his sojourn there, read at the appropriate spots, and returned to its owner at last with warm thanks, and a hint that there was a complete change in the borrower's tone of thought. And no doubt this pilgrim dream has told upon many another traveller, whether in reality or in spirit. It was evidently prompted by some book of Eastern travel—Sir R. K. Porter's, probably; and it is of his own imagination following the traveller, that the poet asks,

> "What went ye out to see
> O'er the rude sandy lea?"

echoing the demand of our Lord, "What went ye out for to see?" Was it for mere excitement or amusement that the mind went along with the description, and beheld stately Jordan in his ravine, or the blue lake of Gennesaret, with the mountains above, and the bordering of rosy blossoms[a]?

These scenes recall the Presence that consecrated them, and these hallowed thoughts next lead to a reflection on the worthlessness of other objects — the purposelessness of all pursuit that has not the glory of God for its object. The ring of "What went ye out for to see?" is still in his ears. The "reeds that tremble in the wind" are made to represent the charms of scenery when viewed "in listless dalliance" for mere amusement, or excitement, or compliance with fashion, instead of with devout contemplation and adoration of their Maker. And again, the purple and fine linen of those in kings' palaces, stand for wealth, power, and honour. From all these the pilgrim heart turns to trace the Saviour's footsteps around the Holy City; while in such contemplation the actual traveller is ever "drawing daily nearer home," his heavenly home; and the dweller at home is day by day in spirit journeying to the truly glorious land. The veritable pilgrim heeds neither the fickle reeds of fancy, nor honour's purple

[a] Here was the error marked by Dean Stanley; the rhododendrons, now corrected into oleanders.

meed, nor any valued prize of earth, but presses on until he shall be face to face with the greater than John the Baptist, the verily "more than Prophet, more than Angels can adore."

Still the same text heads the *Lyra*, but here a very different note is touched. A vivid picture is drawn of the rugged old oak, in his firmness and strength; and the likeness is traced to the true Priest and preacher of repentance carrying on the mission of the Baptist in grave strength and gentleness.

Fourth Sunday in Advent.

THE strains of to-day have much of the calm, peaceful, waiting joy that pervades the Lessons and the Epistle of the Sunday. This was one of the earliest composed of the whole work, and was one of those that, had the poet been left to himself, he would have kept by him for years longer, till something nearer his own standard should be reached. It bears his own especial marks, and has that strong air of spontaneousness and individual feeling which belongs to those poems which came fresh as outpourings of his own soul, and were afterwards applied to the day that best suited them, instead of being as it were reflections upon the services of the day.

"Dimness" is the title given to it in the index, and it is the expression of that strong sense, which was with

him through life, of inability to appreciate the full beauty even of those things on earth which have most of heaven. It is this sense of imperfection, this straining beyond, which is above all the mark of true genius, and the secret of its natural humility. Dulness and conceit think they know the whole; it is only those who "know in part," that feel that it is but a part that they do know.

So it is that the Christian poet expresses his feeling that our eye falls short of unravelling the secrets of nature's beauty, our memory will not recall that which is most precious to it, our ear fails to enter into all that music conveys—all is only grasped in part, and not held fast, not fully tasted.

But the consolation is first in the future hope, when the ear, instead of missing the fulness of earthly music, shall

> "scan aright
> Strains that outring Earth's drowsy chime,
> As Heaven outshines the taper's light;"

the eyes shall

> "see the King's full glory break,
> Nor from the blissful vision shrink;"

the memory shall be no longer needed when we dwell

> "Ever in sight of all our bliss;"

while for the present he likewise finds consolation. The imperfection of our faculties, if it prevents much enjoyment, also saves us from much suffering in the con-

sciousness of the saddening sights which we lose. And on one side our perceptions do become clearer. Our bodily faculties cannot indeed go beyond their appointed limits, but the soul that looks upwards *does* increase in power of enjoyment and comprehension of the things of heaven; while the ear, if incapable of "threading the maze of harmony," can attune itself to the secret of the harmony above—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven;" and thus may be trained to

"For ever rise, and sing, and shine."

The *Lyra* gives us for to-day one of the very sharpest and most polished of all its shafts, in the striking meditation on the "Danger of Praise," deduced from the humble replies of St. John the Baptist. It is almost a cry of pain, and an appeal against the peril of "being spoken well of by all men," as well as the soundest counsel against taking home mortal commendation, "yet more in heart than tongue."

The last verse is one that surely can never be forgotten:—

"Pray we our Lord, one pang to send
Of deep remorseful fear
For every smile of partial friend.—
Praise be our Penance here!"

Christmas Day.

CHRISTMAS, the Feast of our blessed Lord's Infancy, could not but overflow with associations to the poet of holy childhood; and here we have a perfect wealth of verses inspired by the joy of the Nativity.

Let us begin by that to which the earliest hour is allotted — "Christmas Eve, Vespers," — in the *Lyra Innocentium.*

The *motif* of the poem was the incident of the schoolmaster's little daughter, about three years old, coming into church on that evening, expecting to see the decorations; and when she found that they were not yet put up, turning round, and saying in the Hampshire fashion, that always so terms berried holly, "There's no Christmas here."

The words found a deep echo :—

"What if that little maiden's Lord,
The awful Child on Mary's knee,
Even now take up the accusing word :—
'No Christmas here I see!

"'Where are the fruits I yearly seek,
As holy seasons pass away,
Eyes turn'd from ill, lips pure and meek,
A heart that strives to pray?

"'Where are the glad and artless smiles,
Like clustering hollies, seen afar
At eve along the o'ershaded aisles,
With the first twilight star?'"

Thence arises the prayer, that the "unfruitful plant" may be spared yet this year also, so that—

> "By winter frosts and summer heats,
> By prunings sharp and waterings mild,
> Keen airs of Lent, and Easter sweets,
> Tame Thou the sour and wild!"

And so the final hope is given that—

> "O dream of joy!—the wither'd bough
> May blush with fruitage still."

Pass on a few hours, and the note is taken from St. Paul's exhortation of last Sunday: "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say unto you, Rejoice." This Christmas Eve bed-time song is a very Benedicite, calling on Christ's little ones to rejoice with the stars above, with the green leaves and bright berries—

> "The glistening beads above, the burnish'd leaves beneath,"

which already in the midst of rejoicing betoken the Crown of Thorns, and with their guardian spears are ready to deter the hand of the profane.

Rejoice, again, with the angel powers on high, now gathering to attend on His cradle; and again,—

> "Rejoice in God alway,
> All creatures, bird and beast,
> Rejoice, again I say,
> His mightiest and His least;
> From ox and ass that wait
> Here on His poor estate,
> To the four living Powers, decreed
> A thousand ways at once His awful car to speed."

Then, again, rejoice with the Saints in Paradise, who join in our midnight service, awaiting with us the wondrous New Birth and full Regeneration; and once more,—

"Ye babes, to Jesus dear,
Rejoice in Him alway.
Ye whom He bade draw near,
O'er whom He loved to pray,
Wake and lift up the head
Each in his quiet bed.
Listen: His voice the night-wind brings:
He in your cradle lies, He in our carols sings."

Critically speaking, we believe this is the most perfect, as it certainly is the most musical, of all the Nativity hymns. It is the most really a song of praise; while the "Christmas Day," that immediately follows, is a marvellously sweet meditation for a mother "waiting on an infant at home," and reflecting how she and her little one may join in the universal adoration. For the babe—she reads its smile as betokening some dream of joy—

"As if, the new-born Spirit o'er,
Came voices low from where departed babes adore."

And for her own share in the worship:—

"We offer thee to Him, this hour,
Who in like slumber veil'd His power:
Thy cradle with its hopes and fears,
Thy May-day smiles and April tears,
Whate'er thou hast, whate'er thou art,
Howe'er thy mother's dreaming heart

Shapes thy bright doom
In years to come;—
All with that offering would we blend,
Which Saints on earth to Angel hands commend
To bear on high, this favour'd day,
And on the sovereign Babe's unquenchèd altar lay."

Then, recurring to the mysterious smiles of infancy, comes the thought, how ineffable must have been the expressions that flitted over the face of that Sovereign Babe, such as could be read neither by prophet nor angel.

The Infant Saviour was but once on earth—once for all; the sight of Him in His wonderful Infancy is over, and for ever:—

"But, Infant dear,
Unveil'd and clear,
Thou shalt behold Him as He died,
Thine eye shall gaze upon the Crucified:
In mercy may He meet thy gaze,
And all the joy fulfil of all His bright glad days!"

The predecessor of all these—which, in spite of all their beauty, our elder readers will agree with us in loving the best—is of more universal application, as it breaks out,—

"What sudden blaze of song
Spreads o'er th' expanse of Heaven?"

and follows the glorious manifestation to the shepherds in exulting lines, that bear our hearts along with them.

The point where the verses become meditative, rather than joyous, is where we are bidden to mark at what words of the message the Angels broke into rejoicing; namely, at the revelation that the Deity had become Incarnate, and was actually tabernacling among men. Then, after dwelling on the details of the actual Presence of the Saviour in the manger at Bethlehem, we are reminded that though He is no more there in bodily Presence, yet that He is verily born in the heart of the faithful Christian, enthroned in the pure virgin bosom, and to be found by those who seek Him, whether simple men like the shepherds, or sages who have followed truth along her star-paved way.

The shepherds who were guided by Angels, then become to the anxious pastoral heart the type of the watchers of the fold, who tend their wandering sheep through the long night of this world, and whose dreary vigil is to be cheered by "glad tidings of immortal joy," in the thought of "th' eternal home their Saviour left for them," when He came to be that chief Shepherd, who will one day hold out to them the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

St. Stephen's Day.

No day has been more full of inspiration than that of the first martyr, whether we think of Dr. Neale's

beautiful translation of the *Stichera* of St. Anatolius, Bishop Heber's stirring hymn of victory,

"The Son of God goes forth to war,"

or of the two now before us, both gems of their volumes. That in the "Christian Year" is an early composition, and is one of the most rapt and exultant of all. The thought—for which the note refers to "Wheatly on the Common Prayer," but which had been current in the Church from early times—namely, that of the classification of the saints into martyrs in will and deed, in will alone, and in deed alone, and that each of these divisions is represented in the three holy-days that follow upon that of the Nativity; that thought is carried out by the first verse, describing the rays that shoot up before the rising sun, and illuminate the heavens with brightness derived from him, and comparing them to these three bands of holy ones, each of whom has a representative close to the great day of the birth of the Sun of Righteousness—those pressing on to welcome death for His sake—those who have calmly waited till their allotted time—and the little ones whose testimony was truly in blood, but was unconsciously given.

"Foremost and nearest to His Throne,"

we are called on to contemplate St. Stephen, as when he gazed stedfastly into heaven, and from his very coun-

tenance, reflecting that which he beheld, the ecstacy of the vision could be perceived.

> "The glory which our God surrounds,
> The Son of Man, th' atoning wounds—
> He sees them all; and earth's dull bounds
> Are melting fast away."

"He sees them all," and thus is his heart filled with love and likeness to his Saviour, whose own very words become his own—"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" "Lord Jesu, receive my spirit." Only beneath the Cross can such prayer as this be taught; and the life of him to whom it comes spontaneously, must have been above this earth while in it, sustained by pure inspiration from heaven; and thus well may his countenance become like that of an angel, "all radiant with celestial grace." So would the poem remind us. May St. Stephen's life be lived by those to whom it is not given to die St. Stephen's death.

Complete in itself, and harmonious as is this poem, it seems to us to be surpassed by that in the *Lyra*, entitled "The Saint's Infancy," and given to this holy-day, both on account of the martyr's "angel face" in that supreme hour, and likewise of the meaning of his name, Stephanos, 'a crown,'—the crown or wreath of victory, so eagerly contended for by those that strive for the mastery.

"Where is the brow," he asks, "that already bears the crown of pure angelic light, even in this world?

and who is there able to discern it?" The first answer is this Pentecostal brightness; it is worn by the newly-baptized; and that the faith that has brought the little one to baptism can discern it; and the grace that brought the light, can guard and fan it, even until the seal of the Holy Spirit is poured in Confirmation, to rest on the young head bowed in faith. There, again, is the light; there the true Pastor discerns it.

It may be that among these young people, there may be one whom the Lord may choose in His own time for a special outpouring of His grace, an inward revelation of His will. So shall he,

> "mid his brethren, bear unknowing
> The lustre keen within him glowing,
> But veil it, when he feels their gaze,
> As Moses veil'd the Sinai rays.—
> Blest, who so shines: and blest the thoughtful few,
> Who see that brightness true."

But there is a higher stage still. The light can glow yet more intensely, for

> "Ever as earth's wild war-cries heighten,
> The Cross upon the brow will brighten,
> Till on the very scorner's gaze
> Break forth the Heaven-reflecting rays."

Well may the challenge be uttered—

> "Yes—strive, thou world, in thy rash tyrant-mood,
> To slake that burning Cross in blood:—
> It will but brighter burn,
> As martyrs' eyes near and more near discern

Where on the Father's right hand beaming,
Light upon Light in glory streaming,
The Saviour, felt, not seen, in life,
Deigns to be seen in that last strife,
And Angels hail, approaching to the shore,
Rays like their own, and more."

How awful is the possibility that such a glory may be the lot of one of the smiling children who play around us :—

"O hope, for prayer too bold and thrilling,
O bliss, to aid its high fulfilling!
O woe and wrong, O tenfold shame,
To mar or damp the angelic flame!
To draw His soldiers backward from the Cross!
Woe and eternal loss!"

It should be remembered, that all that enervates—all that puts worldly advantage first—all that selfishly exaggerates the domestic ties, so as to hold back the eager spirit—is in danger of "drawing a soldier backward from the Cross." It is a grave thought in these days of trial and of proof.

The poem is full of associations. The infant's bright crown of light everyone must have almost imagined themselves to see, when the brow is still "glistening with baptismal dew." And indeed, these verses never fail to bring to my mind a christening scene, when Mr. Keble, his brow with its "crown of glory" of silvery white hair, held the babe in his arms, and the light from

the window above shone on both. None more entirely fulfilled his own description of unknowing "bearing the lustre keen within him glowing, and veiling it when he *felt* the gaze." How exactly this answers to Dr. Newman's verses:—

"I saw thee once, and nought discerned
For stranger to admire;
A serious aspect, but it burned
With no unearthly fire.

"Again I saw, and I confessed
Thy speech was rare and high;
And yet it vexed my burdened breast,
And scared—I knew not why.

"I saw once more, and, awe-struck, gazed
On form and face and air;
God's living glory round thee blazed—
A Saint—a Saint was there."

St. John's Day.

"LORD, and what shall this man do?" The question occurred to the Fellow of Oriel, in the schools, during the examination of his friend, afterwards the Rev. James Lowe; and the meditation on the future fate of the young man took form in the verses, which were at once written down, nearly as they stand at present.

The answer to the question is soon found:—

"If his love for Christ be true,
Christ hath told thee of his end."

The intermediate course may be hidden from us, whether long or short, rough or smooth, in solitude or in company—there is blessing and consolation in each.

> "When the shore is won at last,
> Who will count the billows past?"

"Only"—and who has not prayed this prayer?—

> "Since our souls will shrink
> At the touch of natural grief,
> When our earthly lov'd ones sink,
> Lend us, Lord, Thy sure relief;
> Patient hearts, their pain to see,
> And Thy grace, to follow Thee."

The whole poem is one of those peculiarly spontaneous and simple ones, that are the least hard to enter into, and have upborne the faith of so many by their perfect trust.

That "venture of faith" made by the two brothers, whose outward lot was so dissimilar, is a subject much dwelt on by this school of thought. It furnishes the theme of "Baptismal Vows," the *Lyra* poem of this feast; which is, as it were, a dialogue with the soul of the newly baptized, "the happy new-born babe," whom poetry can venture to make conscious of his privileges, and able to express them; and when warned of the awful pledge, and the many dangers around, to make answer,

"'Nay, I will drink His Cup; my vow is taken;
With His baptizing Blood mine own shall blend;
Ne'er be that holiest charge by me forsaken,
The dying Saviour's trust to each true friend.'"

Then, again, comes the warning of the intense purity of the Saints within, exemplified above all in the Virgin Mother, and the virgin son, to whom our Lord commended her from His Cross; but the reply is an entreaty for intercession:—

"'Then ask for me of the dread Son of Mary,
Whose arms eternal are young children's home,
A loving heart, obedient eyes and wary,
Even as I am to tarry till He come.'"

The rejoinder points to the means of grace that exist besides prayer.

"His bosom-friend ate of that awful Bread:"

and the child again owns—

"'Tis meet and right, and mine own bounden duty.
Good Angels guide me with pure heart to fall
Before His Altar-step, and see His Beauty,
And taste of Him, my first, my last, mine all.'"

The leading thought throughout these stanzas is, that St. John is in a certain manner the type of what every Christian would fain be—embraced in the arms of His mercy, boldly vowing to share His Baptism and His Cup; and maintaining his purity and strength, by the partaking of the Heavenly Food; and tarrying till the call came in baptismal innocence.

After all, the hymn of the Evangelist himself—not

merely on thoughts connected with him—is the grand one, which the "Salisbury Hymnal" called forth. A magnificent hymn it is, giving praise to the Divine "Word Supreme," whom St. John set forth, for the holiness of His Saints, and especially—

> "Like an eaglet in the morn,
> One in stedfast worship eyes Thee,
> Thy belov'd, Thy latest born."

In a flood of lofty musical poetry, we are led to adoration of the Redeemer for all that glorified His beloved—the charge from the Cross—the perception of the mystery of the pierced side—his foremost faith at the grave.

> "Much he ask'd in loving wonder,
> On Thy bosom leaning, Lord!
> In that secret place of thunder,
> Answer kind didst Thou accord,
> Wisdom for Thy Church to ponder
> Till the day of dread award.
>
> "Lo! Heaven's doors lift up, revealing
> How Thy judgments earthward move;
> Scrolls unfolded, trumpets pealing,
> Wine-cups from the wrath above,
> Yet o'er all a soft Voice stealing—
> 'Little children, trust and love.'"

The Holy Innocents.

THIS glimpse into the heavenly host, as it were, always reminds me of a picture in the Louvre, not by an artist of great note, if I remember right, but remarkable for

representing not only the slaughter of Bethlehem below, but above, looking from the clouds, a smiling little creature, apparently the spirit of the first of the martyred babes, with a whole sheaf of palm-branches in one arm, and with the other holding one of the triumphal boughs in promise to his dying companions.

The whole company, complete and joyous, shine among the celestial guards attending on our Lord in His cradle at Bethlehem, before the eyes of the gazer,

> "Their palms and garlands telling plain
> That they are of the glorious martyr train;"

and yet with no trace of conflict, nor of suffering, but all "bright and smiling love." The answer is the beautiful verse—

> "'These, like yourselves, were born to sin and die;
> But ere the poison root was grown,
> God set His seal, and mark'd them for His own;
> Baptiz'd in blood for Jesus' sake,
> Now underneath the Cross their bed they make,
> Not to be scar'd from that sure rest
> By frighten'd mother's shriek, or warrior's waving crest.'"

From these first-fruits of the Church, the poem passes on to speak of our blessed Lord's love for

> "The 'innocent brightness' of an infant's face,"

and of the blessing He bestowed on them. Then, as they looked in His Face, and smiled—as unconscious of His infinite greatness, as a child of the vastness of the

ocean, on whose beach he is at play—did He not in them bless all other infant souls, as well as the little ones of Bethlehem, who died that He might "live, for them a sadder death to see?" And are not His words of blessing and invitation to little children the most precious consolation of the Christian mother, when called on to part with "her treasur'd hope, just born, baptiz'd, and gone?" Here is the assurance that Rachel may "refrain her voice from weeping, and her eyes from tears, for her children shall come again, yea, even to their own border:" their own indeed, where she shall meet them for ever—where indeed she need not grudge to leave them, since the one great desire of her heart has been that they should safely attain thither.

"She dares not grieve—but she must weep."

amid her true thankfulness for the peace and safety of her darling, when gathered into the arms of the Shepherd.

The "Innocents' own Lyre" has one of the poems rather assigned to their feasts than intended for them, it being the vicar's meditation on one of the simple parish incidents, or rather scenes, of his daily rounds. It must have been at Ampfield, for that alone of the three churches bears the "burnished cross" upon the slender spire of the little arched bell-turret, rising aloft above the woods that surrounded it on two sides—the small village lying towards the west, and the south open to a wide extent (then) of heath, scattered with a few plantations.

Along the lane, towards the north, bordered with picturesque cottages in pretty gardens, lies the way back to Hursley; and in passing along, the Vicar's ear is caught by the murmured music within one of the cottages, where a young sister, left in charge, is rocking the baby to sleep to the tune of the seventy-first Psalm—

> "In Thee I put my steadfast trust,
> Defend me, Lord, for Thou art just,"—

as it ran in the old Tate and Brady version, not then superseded either by his own "Oxford Psalter," or the "Salisbury Hymnal."

That the tune was hummed without the words, he attributes to instinctive reverence,

> "Lest haply ruder ears be nigh;"

but the infant needs not the utterance; he is soothed into a perfect sense of safety and rest, as though the Saving Name were breathed over him every time to guard his sleep from all danger or evil. Nay, as to all such sacred words themselves as those indicated, all the divine prayers and psalms, angels may understand, infants feel them, while we do but guess at their meaning, until the time of clear light shall come, and we shall comprehend the force that dwells within them, and how they guard us from whatever taints the air—the terror by night, or the arrow that flieth by day, whether for the body or the soul.

The last verse turns from the present babe to Him

who wore a like infant form, and thereby consecrated childhood, and blessed its joys, as well as the cares of our later age. The cradle watched by Him is safe—secure as befits the babe's own unconsciousness of danger. Satan's breath cannot reach it—nay, nor Herod's sword; for even should the little life be cut short by it, as hath been in many a wholesale massacre and martyrdom, what doth the infant but glorify his Lord by his death? Yea and without horror or terror, for to him the murderer's shout is but the lullaby that hushes him to the rest that remaineth for the people of God [b].

Nor must we pass the three verses in the "Child's Christian Year," (and now in the "Miscellaneous Poems,") which Mr. Keble himself called a *condensing* of a hymn by another hand, which was sent to him for approval, but really was an entirely new poem, all but the first line—

"Bethlehem, above all cities blest,"—

contrasting the joy of the one day with the anguish that so soon followed, and drawing the application:—

"'Tis ever thus—who Christ would win,
Must in the school of woe begin;
And still the nearest to His Face
Know least of their own glorious place."

[b] This at least is the way in which we understand this last terse and somewhat obscure stanza.

First Sunday after Christmas.

HEZEKIAH has furnished the subject of two poems. That in the *Lyra* has no day connected with it, but we mention it here because the Lessons chiefly relate to that good king. "Hezekiah's Display" is a poem which all whose love and exultation rest on their little ones, whether their children or their pupils,—

> "Shut fast the door, nor let the world discern,
> And offer thee fond praise when God is nigh.
> * * * * * *
> "Close thou the garden-gate, and keep the key,
> There chiefly, where the tender seedlings fold
> Their dainty leaves—a treasure even to thee
> Unknown, till airs celestial make them bold."
> * * * * * *

Assuredly shewing off is fatal to the little ones, whose only protection against its evils lies in that shyness which coaxing and flattery endeavour to destroy. Never perhaps did the true welfare of children more need that their friends should take home the admonition:—

> "Think of the babes of Judah's royal line:—
> Display but touch'd them with her parching glare
> Once, and for ages four they bear the sign,
> The fifth beheld them chain'd in Babel's lair."

"The Sun-dial of Ahaz" in the elder work is adapted not only to the Lesson on Hezekiah's sickness, but to

the last Sunday in the year. It brings before us how Hezekiah might have felt that sun and moon might indeed stand still to prolong the day of victory of the wars of the Lord when Canaan was won for His chosen; but how could it be that their course should be checked for the sake of *one* sick man?

Turning to ourselves, as the year passes away, the thought is suggested how gladly we too would recall the waves of time that have borne us on unfelt far into our lives, so that we might live our days over again. Then comes the retrospect, speaking to each one of us, the "bright hopes," the resolutions "too pure to be performed," the "prayers blown wide by gales of care;" well if no more positive sins weigh upon our conscience. What can make up for them? Can the most bitter remorse ever atone for sin, even though it were the misery of a whole future life? Can the wildest demonstrations win us back "one little day" to redeem the past?

Nay, it is not our grief, but God the Saviour's love that wins our pardon. It is love—rejoicing grateful love—rejoicing and grateful amid her very tears—tears, not dim and stained, but glowing with rainbow hues of light as the wings of Seraphim.

> "Time's waters will not ebb, nor stay,
> Power cannot change them, but Love may;
> What cannot be, Love counts it done."

Love—one moment of sincere love, outweighs in God's balance all that world of folly and sin behind. Such love as *she* brought to whom "much was forgiven because she loved much," is the love here meant, and prayed for in the earnest words,—

> "O Thou, who keep'st the Key of Love,
> Open Thy fount, eternal Dove."

Thence we turn to a bright and beautiful meditation of the childless man, who loved and cherished children as the buds of the Church—upon St. Joseph, and his reverent guardianship of the Holy Child and His Mother, regarding the relationship in which that "just man" stood to his "dread nurse child," as hallowing the whole connection between all who stand in parental relation, as sponsors, clergy, or nursing friends, to the young. It is so sweet and simple that there is no analyzing it—only by dwelling on it can it be appreciated.

The Circumcision.

THE first suffering of the Infant Saviour is naturally the subject foremost in the "Thoughts on Little Children." It is one of the simpler poems, reminding the mother who is almost angered as well as grieved by her innocent babe's pain, that he "is as his Saviour Lord,"

and that His blessed Mother patiently submitted to her sinless Babe's sufferings:—

> "For why? that Mother's love
> Is one with His Almighty Will."

That resignation of the will is the sole way of comfort.

But in the "Christian Year," though the same thought of that suffering is introduced, it is in the deep doctrinal aspect. "Without blood there is no atonement," and thus the natural wailings and tears of infancy were not sufficient. These are the ordinary portion of childhood throughout the world; but He was born "under the Law," and therefore submitted to the legal knife, shedding the drops that marked and dedicated Him for sacrifice like the libation of wine poured on a victim's head. Again those blood-drops were the pledge, the earnest as it were, of the great Blood-shedding of the Atonement. And again, by admitting Him, the Lord Jesus, to the Israelitish congregation, His Circumcision made Him one with the ancient Jewish Church; and thus imparted to those of old, membership with Him, and participation in the benefits that He confers on us; so that He is the salvation alike of those who lived before and after His coming in the flesh—and His saving Love may be said to mount up against the stream of time, even as the sea in full tide drives back the current of a river. Thus both the saints of old and we

ourselves equally belong to Him, and have our share in Him.

Circumcised into the Old Covenant; by His own Baptism sanctifying the instrument of admission to the New, both Covenants met in Him who alone could perfectly fulfil either: and thus, through our union with Him, we are closely connected with the holy men of old, and

> "Saints, parted by a thousand year,
> May thus in heart embrace."

The consolation of looking back to our predecessors as examples, nay, sympathizers in our trials, is then shewn by turning the eyes of the heart-sick and weary of the faithless world back to the Father of the Faithful, who once stood alone as a believer in his generation. As to the poet, where can such a range of notes of joy and woe, of praise or mourning, be found as in David's minstrelsy? To both—in all their characters, as to all else that we love and reverence among the saints of old—are we united by and through our blessed Lord; and if it be a comfort to look back to such as these, how much greater that the child of tears, cradled in care and woe, lonely or disappointed, can remember that—

> "The Giver of all good
> E'en from the womb takes no release
> From suffering, tears, and blood."

And by His example, who suffered before He entered into His glory, we learn the lesson of mortification :—

"If thou wouldst reap in love,
First sow in holy fear:
So life a winter's morn may prove
To a bright endless year."

Second Sunday after Christmas.

SINGLE stanzas and couplets of this day's "Pilgrim Song" are among the sweetest and most recurring echoes of the "Christian Year," and yet, as a connected whole, it is one of the most difficult to follow or understand. Perhaps we had better endeavour to outline, as it were, the under-current of thought.

The first verse is the question of the sufferer in mind or body. "Can wayward despondency be pardoned?" Surely it can, for God has listened to many a prayer since Hagar cried to Him in the wilderness. Surely He will, even as He gave water from the rock at the touch of Moses' rod.

And here, the wilderness becomes, as usual, the emblem of our lives, and the miseries of wanderers there stand for the sadder and drearier portions of human life, as the streams of water that gushed forth from the rock typify the "water of life," springing forth even in the midst of our sorrows from the Rock of Ages.

The "dry unfathomed deep of sand" would then be trying and weary monotony; the terrible sand-storm,

> "When the scorching whirlwinds heap
> Their waves in rude alarm,"

would represent the moments of sharper anguish or danger; the delusive mirage,

> "When o'er th' horizon's silent line
> Fond hopeless fancies cower,"

the vain heart-sick imaginations that vex and tantalize one wearied by monotony; the bitter waters attained with so much toil, moments of keen disappointment.

Yet a blessing is on all these. Even out of disappointment, joy and peace may be brought by the Cross, as the waters of Mara were sweetened by the wood:—

> "Thou wilt be there, and not forsake,
> To turn the bitter pool
> Into a bright and breezy lake,
> The throbbing brow to cool:
> Till left awhile with Thee alone
> The wilful heart be fain to own
> That He, by whom our bright hours shone,
> Our darkness best may rule."

Then, in contrast to the efforts made in vain to reach the shining mirage lake, or the salt bitter pools of the desert, both mere matters of *sight* not of faith, is set the sure instinct of the pelican flying securely, led

by the hand of God, to the water out of sight, not fearing to entrust her nest to His charge; and thus reproving thankless man, who must needs have his blessings in *sight*, and fears to journey on where he has them not close within his grasp, though he may be certain that they are full before him. And yet more, a Pilgrim has been before us, has endured the same woes, has left His marks to guide us, and—

> "Where on the sand Thy step appears,
> Thy crown in sight is hung."

Then follows a most tender and soothing invocation to that Pilgrim—

> "who did sit on Jacob's well
> The weary hour of noon,"

an invocation which it is hardly possible to refrain from quoting, even though we know it must be in the ears and hearts of all our readers.

The *Lyra* has the "Octaves of Festivals," shewing how recurrence is almost invariable in all that is truly beautiful. Each great feast strikes the Octave again, and an eagerness for change and variety is but a token of frivolity and imperfection: for love never wearies of repetition. Little children's "again" is taken as an instance of this delight in sweet iterations, and so is their mother's unceasing patience with recurring notes, and with the sameness of her charge.

The Epiphany.

THE first half of this poem is one of ordinary human life and experience, and is easily understood; the second half is connected with the history of the world, and is less readily followed.

"The Day Star of Faith" dawns readily on the pure and believing heart of childhood, amid the training of home; but the keen perception becomes dimmed in the glare of earthly day, and less clear-sighted faith and hope must be our guides, and certain ones, for—

> "the waymarks sure
> On every side are round us set,
> Soon overleap'd, but not obscure.
> 'Tis ours to mark them or forget."

And if they are well observed, the bright and vivid realizing faith (our childhood's star) will revive in us, in the serenity of old age, as to the wise men of the East; nor leave us until "we have the fruition of His glorious Godhead."

When that renewal of pure faith, almost sight, shall come, and enable us to enter into the wondrous scene of our Sovereign Master,—

> "swath'd in humblest poverty,
> On Chastity's meek lap enshrin'd,
> With breathless Reverence waiting by,"

will it not bring back the glow of joy and love that the

child feels burning within him in his wonder and gratitude for stars and flowers?

Here there is an almost abrupt transition from ourselves to the Church. There is this connection to be understood, though not expressed, that the history of the whole body is often typified in that of one particular member. The verse of entreaty—the prayer we are supposed to put up on our pilgrimage to our Lord's Presence—goes on to plead—

> "Did not the Gentile Church find grace,
> Our mother dear, this favour'd day?
> With gold and myrrh she sought Thy face,
> Nor didst Thou turn Thy face away."

By the Gentile Church we are to understand the whole earth beyond the Jewish pale—that personification to whom the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah is addressd. In earlier, purer days there was a patriarchal faith—the faith held by Melchizedek, by Job, by Jethro, by Heber the Kenite, by Jonadab the son of Rechab—the faith that together with corrupt practice we see in Balaam, and the remnant of which at the outset of the "self-chosen ways" is to be detected in the thoughts and systems of the more ancient races—in the primitive framework of the religions of India, Persia, Greece, Rome, and the North. Like the Wise Men—like ourselves in early childhood—our Gentile mother had once had her glance directed aright; but she wandered aside from the way,

into superstition and defilement; her eyes became dim, and she utterly lost the star of faith. Primitive religion —which can be traced in the earlier literature of India and Greece, and in the grand old Roman customs— vanished as time went on, and only the nobler spirits of Greece and Rome strove hard to clear their sight by the efforts of philosophy; but the Day Star was not to be discovered again save by revelation.

Then, when Faith did dawn on the Gentile world, the shame for past idolatry equalled the joy of the present devotion. Her kings laid down their crowns, her wisest consecrated their wisdom; the choicest, most precious gifts of beauty, architecture, music, art, wealth, have been laid at the feet of the Saviour.

Our forefathers gave their *best.* What do we give in offering to the Saviour? Where are our vigils and our fasts? They served Him with their whole heart; we serve Him as far as we can consistently with our own comfort.

The *Lyra* has a simple poem, summoning us to greet our King with the gifts that are represented in those of the Wise Men—the gold of love, the myrrh of penitence, the frankincense of prayer.

First Sunday after Epiphany.

THE scenery of these verses, which always seems like the first note of spring, coming as they do on one of the coldest and most wintry Sundays in all the year, is taken from the walk to Coln St. Aldwyn's, a small living held by Mr. Keble's father, about three miles from Fairford, on the banks of the river Coln, which is shaded with willow trees. The photograph of the "streamlet" and its trees may be seen in "Memorials of the Rev. J. Keble." The island there is not, however, the snowdrop islet of "Easter Tuesday," which is on the Test.

It is quite honour enough for the Coln to have suggested the

"Lessons sweet of spring returning,"

and perhaps the universal charm of these stanzas is partly owing to their having been the fruit of a scene commonplace to commonplace eyes, but such as all may read. Mr. Ruskin has remarked that high poetry seems more apt to spring up amid landscapes of quiet, smiling, moderate beauty, than in the wilder, more rugged and astonishing splendours men go in search of—adducing Shakespeare as his primary instance; and Milton might also have been mentioned, great part of his youth having been spent in the same kind of scenery as surrounds Fairford. Indeed, we fully believe that tranquil beauty,

brooded over and studied in all its aspects by a loving soul, is the meetest school of poetry, and inspires more deep thought than a hurried glance at more striking scenes.

The willows of Coln then, by their brave little red budlets, preparing, to open into silver studs, and by-and-by into soft golden palms, long ere the wintry season be over, advancing on every breath of spring, holding back, but unscathed, unblighted by recurring frost and blight, teach their lessons of content,—

> "Ready to give thanks and live
> On the least that Heaven may give."

Then comes the walk along the stony vale, with the nightingales singing, as they seem to do by preference, by the road-side, loving, as the sociable birds seem to do, the neighbourhood of man, and stir of life, though never visible. Their example is summed up in the two concluding lines:—

> "So they live in modest ways,
> Trust entire, and ceaseless praise."

This is the Sunday of the one Gospel of our Lord's childhood, the Gospel that gives us the lesson of obedience in His subjection to His parents; but there is another lesson drawn in the *Lyra Innocentium*, and one that every older generation feels in turn. No two hearts are ever exactly alike, in all—even where there is a

hereditary likeness, and one character has been moulded on another. None, then, can thoroughly fathom another heart; and "Trustworthiness" speaks to those who begin to find the young spirit they have hitherto guarded begin to reach beyond their ken, and to wander in regions they have not trodden.

"Glad may they be and calm of heart,"

who can be perfectly sure of the holiness, innocence, and devotion, of their child in whatever walk he chooses :—

"Who, out of sight
Know all is right,
One law for darkness and for light."

It was a thought that Mr. Keble always liked to dwell on, that the three days' absence of her holy Son was, as it were, an intimation to His blessed Mother, that He would not be as other women's sons, always hers and at her side—nay, that it served as a mysterious preparation for the three days that He would indeed be hidden from her sight; and that in like manner some little incident of child life, unnoted at the time, but perhaps laid up deep in a mother's heart, may be a training for the greater griefs and joys of after life by the impression it leaves on the soul.

"Prepare Thou still
Our heart and will,—
Our friends' and ours,—for good and ill."

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

THE Wedding Feast of Cana is the subject of both the poems of this day; but while the one applies the saying, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now," to the things of human life, the other reaches upwards, and reads in it a meditation upon things earthly and things divine.

Turning first to the poem on the "best kept to the last," in human life, we find the scene opening with the picture of childish joy and mirth—the natural happiness and high spirits with which we begin life, but which will assuredly be lost in the course of self-indulgence. If we follow the natural human impulse to make the most of our enjoyments, we shall certainly find them dropping away from us one after the other, and leaving us desolate.

Such is the world's feast, and the parallel to the habit referred to by the governor of the feast is carried into further detail. As those who drink for mere enjoyment soon lose the delicacy of their taste, and require the fiercest stimulants, impure as well as fiery; so those who live for pleasure soon find harmless amusements pall on them, and cry with Madame de Longueville, "I have no taste for innocent pleasures!" or with that other *blasée* Frenchwoman, who, on drinking a glass of

cold water, exclaimed, "Would that this were a sin!" as if that were wanting to give it a zest.

How unlike the feast of good things the Saviour offers! Nor, indeed, is it needful to be less happy in youth in order to be innocent. Even as the purest, freshest water sparkles brightest, so

> "Why should we fear, youth's draught of joy,
> If pure, would sparkle less?
> Why should the cup the sooner cloy,
> Which God hath deign'd to bless?"

For the very charm of youth, the secret of its joy, lies in those graces that are the essence of the Christian life. Hope would be the attribute of youth alone, and would perish with experience, but for Faith, who keeps her ever alive and fresh, directs her gaze and steadies it, and thus ensures the continuance of that spring of joy.

Love, again—the joy of childhood and early life—love can only find means of lasting existence in Faith. Parents pass away, but God is still our Father; brethren may fail or die, but our great Elder Brother is the more near and precious. All the choicest treasures of early life are then increased, not wasted, by the lapse of years, in the true Christian; and the prime glory and tenderness of all comes with old age like the sunset hues of autumn. The life that has begun in purity and self-discipline is the life ever brightening, ever youthful.

A still deeper note is struck in the *Lyra*. There

the thought is on the Divine Power which made the water wine, and which imparts sacramental grace to our "Church rites," and brings a mysterious change to those who partake in faith. Marriage, thus sanctified, gives "an angel friend" to share "the everlasting rest." Baptism changes the human sin-stained infant to an innocent saint bearing his Saviour's name. Ordination renders the mortal youth God's highly-gifted Priest, with power to bind and loose; and even with the gift, as his Master's representative, to render the Bread and Wine "more than angels' food." Again, that touch changes death to Resurrection, all through the power of Christ imparted to His living Body, the Church.

Such is the drift, if we may so venture to interpret it, of this latter poem, one of those most remarkable for a certain fulness of thought, scarcely finding adequate expression in the brief stanzas, throughout fraught with awe at the mysterious might of the Divine touch—not only in itself—but conveyed through the Church.

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

THE faith of the Good Centurion, shining forth in the comparatively unenlightened Roman, is the inspiring thought in this poem, which begins by describing the sight of the rainbow in the north, the dark quarter of the heaven.

That rainbow (not a frequent sight) lives in the thought of the pastor as a token

> "how light may find its way
> To regions furthest from the fount of day;"

and in like manner the very dullest, barest down is often full of the lark's sweet song, cheering the weary heart with cheerful notes of praise. In like manner the pastor is often comforted by unexpected evidences of heartfelt religion in the most unlikely parts of his parish, not only encouraging in themselves, but giving the hope that there may be piety as true where it is absolutely unsuspected by man. For there is often a tendency to reserve in strong devotion, and a dread of profession, lest by outrunning practice it should give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. The case of the pious judge, Sir Matthew Hale, is quoted as an instance in the note.

Such devout and anxious believers wait, like the Good Centurion, in silence and at a distance, longing to find a prayer their Lord may hear; but ever recommended to Him by the intercessions of the poor whom their charity has relieved, and whose grateful prayers rise up in their behalf and "pierce the skies." In like manner did the men of Capernaum plead for the friendly Roman who had loved their people, and further, had built for them that synagogue, whose recently discovered entablature, carved with the pot of manna, the ears of

corn, and the vine, shews how Israelite symbolism was standing at the very door of Christian reality.

So has the work of building

"A home for prayer and love, and full harmonious praise,"

been acceptable ever since as an offering to the Lord. For homely as was His life on earth in His voluntary humility, He accepts the most costly offerings that can be brought to Him, for the sake—not of their intrinsic value, which is of course nothing—but of the love that cannot be content without pouring out her best at His feet;—such love as He commended in the Magdalen, and received from Joseph of Arimathea and the faithful women, and which, now that He has left the earth, may spend the utmost efforts of poetry and art in glorifying Him. All alike these endeavours are worthless in themselves, and lost in the full ocean of His glory and love; but His mercy accepts and brightens them,

"To sparkle in His crown above,
Who welcomes here a child's as there an angel's love."

It is the very same thought that crowned this day, thirty years later.

The resemblance is traced between wealth eagerly searching for the most costly gift to express affection, and the delight of children by the sea-side in storing up their treasures for the companions left at home. For alike the offering comes of love, and is to be accepted

by love. Love on either side gives it value. Not a crown, not even the first-born offered up, can equal the love that is ready for us—not to be bought or earned by anything we can give, only by our love itself.

So—having learnt the worth of love, both in the giver and receiver, from the children picking up shells and pebbles on the beach—the Christian poet is reminded of the freedom of the gift by the very cries that haunt the streets of the town. The shouts that proclaim wares to be bought for nothing, bring to his inward ear the cry of Wisdom in the streets: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." So, even in the wilderness of the city, the very cries of mammon may bring the echo of the Saviour's invitation.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

THE Gospel of this day gives us first the calming of the tempest on the lake of Tiberias, and then the healing of the demoniac who was possessed by the legion; concluding with the abject folly of the Gadarenes who rejected the presence of the healing Saviour.

This narrative is the theme of the meditation. First we have the storm in nature; still held and restrained by the Maker's power, who says to the wind as to the

wave, "So far shalt thou come and no farther." We feel a strange exulting fear in the sight of the lightning-flash, and the roar of the tempest; and yet more blessed is the power that tames and orders "the unruly wills and affections of sinful men," and calms their passions into the peace which passeth all understanding.

Yet is there not a love of excitement which believes life to consist in the tumult of human impulses? Nay, which, while forced to spend a quiet eventless career, loves to contemplate the furious conflict of passion, whether in the records of actual guilt or in works of imagination. To delight in such scenes is verily to choose to dwell in the grim sepulchres in the mountain side—amid rottenness, dead men's bones, and the howls of the possessed—rather than to follow the Prince of Peace up the mountain side in the showery freshness of the morning after the storm. So following, so resting on Him, there is perfect repose and security; for "as the hills stand about Jerusalem, so standeth the Lord round about His people from this time forth for evermore."

Can there be a recoil from such security—a preference for the deadly contention of opposing evils, the desert, the tomb, the chain? Alas! too often the world gains the victory: the loss of some temporal possession (like that of the swine) alarms the selfish spirit; slavish terror is awakened by the manifestation of power, and the

Gadarene temper drives the Saviour from the heart. Yet even then His endless pleading is not over. He draws the soul from dreams of earth—now by nature's lessons, now by those of the Gospel—till often the victory is won, and

"Their lawless cries are tun'd to hymns of perfect love."

We believe that the temptation to contemplate vice and to love the excitement of the study of passion, to which these verses primarily referred, was that afforded by Byron's poetry; and that the last lines expressed the hope that could not but be felt, that such a change in the unhappy poet would come while it was not yet too late. In these days the works that dwell on the foul and dark wiles and violences prompted by miscalled love, ambition, or revenge, have not even the ornament of poetry, nor the poor excuse of being the veritable utterances of a diseased spirit. They are mere idle simulations. May not this poem remind us—ere we beguile our time with them in sheer idleness and curiosity—that they put us in danger, not indeed of "doing such things," but of "taking pleasure in those that do them."

The sleep of our Lord on the lake during the tempest has been the subject in the *Lyra* of that most musical and descriptive poem entitled "Sleeping on the Waters," which works up from the flower in the cottage-window,

which "is not afraid of the snow" all around, to the babe sleeping unconsciously in the midst of a mourning or terrified household; then looks back to Moses slumbering in his bulrush ark:—

> "What recks he of his mother's tears,
> His sister's boding sigh?
> The whispering reeds are all he hears,
> And Nile, soft weltering nigh,
> Sings him to sleep; but he will wake,
> And o'er the haughty flood
> Wave his stern rod;—and lo! a lake,
> A restless sea of blood!"

Soon, however, a still mightier sea obeys him, when—

> "To right and left the watery wall
> From Israël shrinks away."

Passing on in thought,—

> "Hail, chosen Type and Image true
> Of Jesus on the Sea!
> In slumber and in glory too,
> Shadow'd of old by thee."

Save that Moses slept calmly by the summer stream, He tossed on the tempestuous lake amid the alarm of His disciples. There had been a prophet who slept while the storm raged, until he awoke and cast himself into the abyss, and therewith came hope and life; and He who so slept on the Lake of Galilee, was even then about to cast Himself into the "wider wilder gulf"—

the gulf of death itself, to win safety, hope, and life, for His Ark, the Church.

The hidden reference all along is to the apparent sleep of the Saviour in the midst of the tempest, and to the faith that should trust to the Presence, in the certainty that He can—in His own time—deliver His people, smite His foes, and make redemption perfect, since He hath already given His life a ransom for His own Ark.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.

"CURE Sin, and you cure Sorrow," is the title of the present poem, and it is one that serves to guide us to the link of thoughts that might otherwise have seemed somewhat disconnected. That call, so frequent in the Psalms, upon God to awaken and make us feel His power and support against His enemies and our own, is often taken up by us in impatience and want of faith, when it seems to us as though He were asleep, or deaf to our calls, because we seem left to ourselves; while all the time—

> "God is there, and at His side
> He triumphs, Who for sinners died."

The real reason of our sense of desolation is that we will not look at Him. We are not really mourning for the lack of Him and of His heavenly comfort, but for

the worldly losses that have depressed our spirits. It is not that we want His grace, but the restoration of our own enjoyments; as, for instance, age might bemoan the departure of the delights of youthful love, when, after all, these were but a sort of idolatry. The secret of our dreariness is not longing after God Himself, but for Him to give us back our pleasures. It is a cowardly spirit that so shrinks, and our tears are mere selfish repinings.

Indeed, many a seemingly desert spot in our life is the very opportunity for bringing the greatest blessings on ourselves and others. In the full tide of successful preaching at Samaria, St. Philip the Deacon was suddenly summoned away to the desert, where he seemed to be utterly devoid of any means of doing good; but he neither delayed, murmured, nor questioned. And in that desert he met the Ethiopian, himself patiently travelling in that lonely spot, and studying in obedient faith the holy words which he could by no means understand, but he did not therefore reject. As the two met, all dreariness was over—the one had found his work and purpose, the faith of the other was enlightened; and when the holy bath of baptism had been administered, they went on their way rejoicing, never probably to meet again upon earth, but each with a joy that no man could take from him. That Ethiopian had with him what could not be dimmed by the glare of high

estate, nor the gloom of woe and want—that gift which is lacking to the cold and proud, who let themselves be bewildered by a heartless crowd, and terrified by every vain report, whereas—

> "No storm can now assail
> The charm he wears within."

It is sin that causes dreariness and sorrow, our own iniquity that hides from us the face of God. Let us weep away our own sin, and then we not only may see clearly for ourselves, but become the intercessors for others.

In the *Lyra* we have some of the sternest and most awful of Mr. Keble's verses, entitled "The Cradle Guarded." They seem to have been elicited by that which he always regarded as absolute cruelty—the endeavour to explain away the declarations of Divine vengeance and everlasting punishment. Fear is needful as well as love; and therefore, already we are reminded that wrath is laid up for the day of wrath. Even as the edges of flame glow up from the pit in Raffaelle's St. Michael—as volcanoes used to be regarded as doors of hell—so even in harvest joy we are reminded of the fate of the chaff and of the weed, and the robes of the vintager are dyed with crimson. And if His angels and saints above cry, "How long, O Lord holy and true, dost Thou not avenge the blood of Thine own

elect," His innocent little ones here below keenly desire to see justice done on the wrong.

These are His awful tokens, and verily it was from the lips of our Lord Himself that we received the fullest intimation of the horrors of everlasting death; and therefore His duteous spouse, the Church, fears to conceal these terrors from her children, and

> "The strain Love taught her, she in love repeats."

So "call it not hard" that it is in the midst of her choicest festival hours she sings her notes of warning in the hymn, *Quicunque*. "Call it not stern" that she never lets her babes lose sight of the smoke hanging over the bottomless pit, though some may tremble whose love would keep them safe even without fear.

> "Might the calm smile, that on the infant's brow
> So brightly beams, all its deep meaning tell,
> Would it not say, 'For Love's sweet sake allow
> Fear's chastening Angel here with me to dwell?
>
> "Was not the purchase of my quiet bliss
> A life-long anguish and a Cross of woe?'"

For surely our very thankfulness for our redemption would be diminished did we not rightly estimate what it saves us from.

If we learn such a lesson at the side of the cradle, as we see that the child's character needs fear as well

as love to guide it, it may be learnt also from the rugged heights that guard the peaceful valleys.

We believe the scenery here described is in the Isle of Skye. There is a rock which below seems a mere peak or pinnacle, but when scaled proves to be a wide shelf, where the cormorant perches, and is strewn with huge rocks as though they had been cast there by giants. Standing on the edge, looking down the precipice into the dark abyss on the landward side, are visible grim crags, a thousand feet below, partly shrouded in cloud, and for ever shaded from the sunlight. A place of terror indeed, it must be, making the gazer on the giddy height feel himself a helpless child, upborne by a powerful arm over a flaming gulf.

> "O surely then to his heart's deep is brought
> The prayer, the vow, there evermore to cling,
> And sickening turn from the wild haunting thought,
> 'What if at once o'er the dread verge I spring?'"

The awful scene impresses on him that there is horror as well as beauty and sweetness in God's world; and when he reaches the soft lovely glen hard by, he feels that it is well that in the fairest, happiest homes we should think of judgment to come, so that the day may find us "watching and praying," not in careless security.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

"THE Benefits of Uncertainty." It is one of the most poetical, and perhaps the most frequently recurring poems in all the volume. Who has not felt the heart-sickness of the suspense that would

> "pray for sharpest throbs of pain
> To ease them of doubt's galling chain?"

and who has not felt at once rebuked and soothed by the very rhythm of the verse that ensues?—

> "Unwise I deem them, Lord, unmeet
> To profit by Thy chastenings sweet,
> For Thou wouldst have us linger still
> Upon the verge of good or ill,
> That on Thy guiding hand unseen
> Our undivided hearts may lean,
> And this our frail and foundering bark
> Glide in the narrow wake of Thy beloved ark."

The analogy is carried on through the best things earth gives. Victory seems infinitely more precious when it is but a merely possible success hanging in the balance, than when it is absolutely secure; and love's first moment of doubting, trembling hope has a charm beyond all the after certainty. The frail flower,

the changeful spring, the last-born babe—each is cherished with a peculiar dearness; and why?—

> "But that the Lord and Source of love
> Would have His weakest ever prove
> Our tenderest care—and most of all
> Our frail immortal souls, His work and Satan's thrall."

For their lot remains even to the last in our own hands, and is the greatest uncertainty of all.

> "I know not yet the promis'd bliss,
> Know not if I shall win or miss;
> So doubting, rather let me die,
> Than close with aught beside, to last eternally."

For what is man's best fancy of Paradise?—the Greek's Elysium of fair groves and meadows of flowers, the Arab's

> "Bright maidens and unfailing vines,"

the Northman's endless chase and nightly festival,—all poor fragments of this low earth, utterly incapable of satisfying a mind that had any perception of immortal truth. In contrast with this, "the Heaven our God bestows," the blessedness of which

> "No Prophet yet, no Angel knows,"

no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

From the aspiration to that intensity of glory, the

poem turns to those who shall share it; neglected, unperceived, doubtful of themselves here, apparently lost like violets in the freezing blast, yet to awake to the ineffable joy in reserve.

> "But peace—still voice and closèd eye
> Suit best with hearts beyond the sky,
> Hearts training in their low abode,
> Daily to lose themselves in hope to find their God."

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall be like Him," was the motto of this poem, and so it is of that in the *Lyra;* but whereas the first related to the "it doth not yet appear," the second is upon "we shall be like Him."

It is one of those charming poems, almost too simple for analysis, which perhaps we love best. As there is always an eager desire to trace the family likeness in a new-born child, so may the guardian angels be watching their charges to find the resemblance of some holy one gone before.

> "For of her Saints the Sacred Home
> Is never quite bereft;
> Each a bright shadow in the gloom,
> A glorious type, hath left."

So may these holy ones seek the dawning likenesses to the saints of old, in whose places the present generation are standing; and as the father's right is owned

first of all in the child, so in the whole communion, triumphant, militant, or new-born, there is that one Image predominant,

> "the Fountain Orb of Good,
> Pure Light and endless Love."

Septuagesima.

On the day on which our Sunday year begins to adapt itself to the time of Easter—when, following the old beginning of the year, the course of reading reverts to the opening record in the Bible—the "Christian Year" has chosen as its subject the accordance between the visible and invisible things of creation; and in one of the earliest, simplest, and most popular poems of the entire collection, has set the Book of Nature beside the Book of Grace, and traced how "all things are double one against another."

After all, the hints are but brief and few, but they are the key to many more. The all-embracing firmament, like the Divine Love; the sun, the Sun of Righteousness, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; the moon, shining by his reflected light, and shewing us that light in his absence, figuring the Church; her saints triumphant shining like stars for ever and ever; her saints below growing as trees by the water side, rooted in faith, blossoming in hope,

bearing fruit of "fair deeds of charity," beneath the fostering dew of Divine Grace—all are touched on, as well as the voices of the sea, the destructive might of fire and tempest, the gentler influence of the wind, the emblem of the silent working of the Holy Spirit; and the two latter verses lead us, both by suggestion and by the prayer the final one breathes, to gaze through the grand allegory of nature, and "read God everywhere."

Some might say that allegory of a fanciful kind reigns again in the *Lyra* "New Creation;" but it is only allegory because God's great works so wondrously figure one another, and even as a tiny drop mirrors a whole landscape, so the New Creation at each baptism is as it were a reflection of the Beginning when God created the heaven and the earth.

So the work of grace is traced through its analogies—the dark waste ere the Holy Spirit, brooding on the waters, awake life and give power to bear fruit, and the Light of Christ dawning on the soul, recall the first day of creation. The second, the day when

> "God stor'd on high
> The dewy treasures of the sky,"

is made to stand for the opening of the stores of grace to the new Christian; the third, when the land was parted from the waters, represents the rescue of the

soul from the waves of this troublesome world. Sun and moon, becoming visible on the fourth day, are, as ever, Christ and His Church shining on the new created soul.

"Motion and life, and flight and song,"

in the birds of the fifth day, foreshew the powers imparted to the soul in Baptism. Then more solemnly is introduced that sixth day, which

"Moulded, at morn, the cold dull clay,
Inspir'd, at eve, the quickening ray,"

when "the first man Adam was made a living soul." That same day was chosen for the death of the Second Man, and in the water of Baptism with Him we die unto sin,

"the fontal wave
Washing us clean, that we might hide
In His love-piercèd side."

The Sabbath of rest then follows. It is said in a half-interrogative manner, that it may find its antitype in the sleep

"Of infant blest,
Borne from the Font, the seal new given,
Perchance to wake in Heaven!"

We own that this does not seem to us of *quite* sufficiently universal application. The rest of the Sabbath here appears to mean that of the babe who slumbers

at once to wake in Paradise; but surely there is a Sabbath for all other Christians on their own Easter Eve, when they shall lie down in hope of the new first day of resurrection. Or does the infant's Sabbath sleep after the Baptism refer to that long rest of all faculties and absence of responsibility, before the real labour of life begin?

Sexagesima.

AWFUL, yet comforting, are both the meditations founded on the history of the Fall of man. The first rehearses the sentence on the sin, and then draws from each point thereof the hidden consolation. The doom of woman to bring forth children in sorrow, is softened by her special share in bringing the Saviour into the world; and her other punishment of inferiority and subjection to man, is brightened by the mystic resemblance to the union of Christ and the soul, or rather of that aggregate of Christian souls, the Church. The curse of labour is given in mercy

"To train us in our way to Heaven."

The shame left on us is compensated by the garments bestowed by God Himself, coats of skin, the skins evidently of sacrificed animals, and therefore typifying the robe of righteousness, bestowed on us by the Victim:

"The very weeds we daily wear
Are to Faith's eye a pledge of God's forgiving might;"

and last and sharpest of all—Death—is rest in the Lord, and the gate of life.

So the fiery two-edged sword of the Cherubim—those four-fold beings who are around the mercy-seat in Heaven, if it for a time warned man aloof from Paradise, yet shewed it too, and at once enlightening and piercing their hearts, (for is it not the Word of God?) kept ever before them that the Tree of Life is still in its place, and that "blessed are they who have a right" thereto.

The verses entitled "Confession," in the *Lyra*, are chiefly founded on the inference mentioned above, that the coats of skins which God gave to Adam and Eve must have been taken from sacrifices, since animals were not as yet used for food, and that sacrifice involved the first revelation of the Atonement, and thus the clothing taken therefrom is an emblem of the imputed righteousness of Christ.

So the thought is gradually worked up. The gentle breeze among the trees brings the thought of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and then, from the shrinking of the guilty pair, we are led to think of our own shrinking from the pain of avowal, and reminded of the fruitlessness of the attempt at concealment, above all from Him who yearns to forgive, but requires our voluntary confession and humiliation.

"These fluttering leaves" (our excuses, our self-defence, and subterfuges,) "do but unveil thy shame."

> "Fall humbly down, and hide thine eyes in dust:
> He will upraise thee, for His own great Name;
> His penance garb will make and shew thee just."

For fulness of doctrine implied in the fewest possible words, this last line seems to us unequalled.

Quinquagesima.

QUINQUAGESIMA always seems divided between two favourite thoughts. It is the Rainbow Sunday, and the Sunday of Charity; and perhaps one special charm in the peculiarly bright soft hymn of the day is that it contrives to unite both thoughts, and make the one shed its light upon the other.

The rainbow-necked, strong-winged, dove, the grey peaceful olive-leaf, the lovely rainbow, are all three saluted lovingly as the still-existing emblems of the Covenant of Mercy granted to man after the Flood. In all the unspeakable delight with which Noah and his family must have come forth from the Ark, what was their first and greatest joy? Love. The gracious promise of mercy and pardon for ever to the earth, rejoicing their hearts as our Lord's look of welcome rejoices the souls that sin and earth forsook in time to die His friends.

And on the patriarch's eye shone the visible token of that promise of love, the gentle rainbow, which is most truly light—light, not dazzling like the sunbeam, but soft and refreshing to the eye.

The rainbow colours are the sun's rays divided and parted into their several hues. Even so the Divine perfection of love, which is too much and too bright for our contemplation in the Godhead, is in our Lord on earth rendered capable of being gazed upon and studied. Like the sunbeam, it is parted into rainbow hues shewn in detail, so as to win our affections and become our example. Then, with a rapid glance at the Epistle in which St. Paul traces every virtue to charity, just as every colour is traced by opticians to light, the whole is summed up in the stanza—

> "God, by His bow, vouchsafes to write
> This truth in Heaven above;
> As every lovely hue is Light,
> So every grace is Love."

The *Lyra* poem—one of those on children's troubles, and entitled "Fear of Wild Beasts,"—seems at first sight vague and dreamy, being apparently founded on, and responsive to, those sensations of undefined awe and terror that haunt little children, and which are treated—as what no doubt they are—*ahnungen*, as the Germans would call them of great realities.

The verses follow the thoughts or rather the impres-

sions of a child, and seem as though they might be recollections of the poet's own musings in infancy. Here is the dread of lightning and storm quelled by the recollection of the rainbow sign; and again that strange horror that most persons can remember to have experienced in early childhood, "of forms of giant mould," or of wild beasts, supposed by imagination to haunt the darkness, or it may be of the actual aspect of fierce animals—is relieved by the thought of the text selected as a motto, "No lion shall be found there, nor any ravening beast go up thereon."

Then, from childish terrors, the meditation proceeds. As the rainbow is the pledge of safety from the deluge, as fierce bulls can be daunted by the stedfast gaze of even a child, asserting man's dominion over the animals; so in the invisible tumults and dangers that beset us, Faith can feel secure the promise of the Saviour, the rainbow of mercy that crowns His head (Rev. x. 1) and encircles the Throne; so His Cross keeps at a distance the powers of hell, the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

Our actual safety from the flood, and our conquest over evil beasts, thus are shewn to typify our state of safety from God's vengeance on the world, and our victory over evil spirits; but we are bidden to take heed, and observe. The promise is only to the "inmates of His Ark." It is those who abide in Him,

and "keep the seal His Holy Spirit made," who have a right to the promise that they shall be preserved from the flood of God's wrath, or rescued from the roaring lion.

Ash-Wednesday.

THIS day brings us to a remarkable chain of meditations connected with the "Forgiveness of Sin." We begin with the "Christian Year" of the day. Human pride conceals the misery of conscience, and crushes the manifestations of pain as something ignoble, excusing itself plausibly by professing that there is no need for the innocent to be pained by the knowledge of guilt.

Yet confession, even to a mere sympathizing friend, is an inestimable relief; how much more so confession to our Creator, poured forth in fulness of humility! And as to sympathy, angels are ever on the watch for the contrite sigh of the penitent; and even were there no angels, we are sure of the fellow-feeling of Him who was in "all things tempted as we are." He went forth in utter loneliness into the desert; but

"High thoughts were with Him in that hour;"

and those who choose the strong path of self-denial, out of reach of all praise of men, have no doubt some faint reflex of the holy contemplation that sustained Him,

and are trained for the moment when they shall see Him as He is.

The Commination poem in the same volume describes the unwonted service of the day, as the Church silver trumpet tuned to love, for that very reason renders more dread each of the awful curses, whose "Amens" first resounded from Mount Ebal. It is in love still that she utters them, just as a mother springs to call her child back from the verge of the abyss. And if she threaten at first, afterwards it is with her tenderness that she calls her wanderer, like the mother in the Greek Epigram, translated by Samuel Rogers:—

> "While on the cliff with calm delight she kneels,
> And the blue vales a thousand joys recall,
> See to the last last verge her infant steals;
> Oh, fly! yet stir not, speak not, lest it fall!
> Far better taught, she lays her bosom bare,
> And the fond boy springs back to nestle there."

For she knows her children now to be wayward and spoilt. Persecution, which braced her youth, is passed, and she urges "godly discipline" to supply its place; knowing that though "to return and love" is the essential to pardon, yet that comfort cannot be gained, save by the penance that shews true hatred for the sin. Kneel down, then, and "sentence all thy sin" with thine own lips; and having thus obtained forgiveness, part for ever

with sullenness and remorse, as though the Cross were in vain.

Both these poems dwell upon inward repentance, and confession in private or public prayer, bringing the sense of pardon "by the judge *within* absolved;" but the poem called "The Three Absolutions," in the *Lyra Apostolica*, declared "the Power of the Keys." The golden keys, uplifted morning and evening, laid on the Altar, and held out to the dying, are the blessed assurance, through Christ's herald, that the gates are not closed against us; and "Tell thy Mother," in the *Lyra Innocentium*, applies our persuasions to a child to tell its fault, to our own case. A mother already guesses what her little culprit has to tell, and yearns over him, till his sorrow justifies her in forgiveness. So does our Mother, the Church, yearn for our repentance and confession to set free her absolving voice.

One last poem must here be mentioned, though on a different topic: the *Lyra* thoughts on the innocent little ones, who do not need to share our penitence, but who gaze from the outside with those puzzled wistful looks, with which children watch those who have heard ill tidings beyond their comprehension.

Yet though—may they ever be preserved from the personal knowledge of the sin—yet the sight of the appointed penitence may guard them, and their presence "fresh from the font" brings a hallowed influence of

love and softness, to touch the heart, and "scare away the powers of ill."

First Sunday in Lent.

THE lessons of renouncing the world and sacrificing the dearest, which so fitly open Lent, furnish the subjects of this day's poetical meditation.

We are made to stand, as it were, overlooking the lovely valley, where five wealthy cities stood on the fertile banks of the Jordan and the fair lake that received it. We hear the shouts of impure revelry and scornful blasphemy and defiance of God, that rise louder and louder; we see God's Angel hovering over it, with the vial of wrath ready to be poured out on it. We marvel wherefore he delays, when justice so clearly calls for vengeance, and then we perceive how he is waiting until God's merciful purpose be accomplished, and the one righteous man and his family guided out of reach of the danger. Mercy is patient with them, frail and reluctant though they be, unwilling to trust themselves to their heavenly guides, mourning what they leave behind, and hanging back for last looks, so that they would be lost, were they not constantly urged on by their angel guardians.

But we find that it is ourselves that we are contemplating under the guise of Lot. We are, like him, called

to come out of and escape from the ruin of the sinful world; but even as he found a near refuge for the time in the little city of Zoar, which was spared at his entreaty, so there are homes and resting-places, little tainted by the sins of the world, and not coming under its peculiar curses. Such a resting-place is the Church on earth—in the midst of the world, yet not of it; and here is our home of shelter, even though we know by the example of Ephesus or Laodicea that when the spirit of the world has thoroughly corrupted a branch of the Church, it is cut off. There remains no place for mercy. If, then, we think we have come out of Sodom merely by our outward allegiance to the Church, we are unsafe. Neither the visible Church, nor the sweetest, most innocent home, is beyond the reach of temptation, corruption, and punishment; there is no safety but in continually reaching beyond these and what they give us, and having our treasure laid up in heaven. Till we have ourselves gained those everlasting hills, and are there delivered from all evil,

"Who rest, presume; who turn to look, are lost."

Solemn, grand, and beautiful, is the poem in the *Lyra*. It might be called, "On the hidden depths of Suffering." The poet places himself with the young men left to wait beneath the mount of sacrifice, where the patriarch and his son disappeared from their sight. As little as they

could, can we follow the real feelings of either, though grave and solemn hints are given in the narrative—just as lookers-on, in the hours of agonizing affliction, cannot fathom the feelings or the conduct of those on whom the bereavement falls; there are hidden depths both of suffering and consolation we cannot penetrate. So we know of, but cannot fully understand, the awful moment when Abraham took the knife to slay his son; nor can we tell all that meek Isaac meant by his question, "Where is the Lamb?" nor how much of conscious hope and prophecy was in Abraham's reply, "The Lord will provide Himself a Lamb." Whatever he meant thereby, even if he knew who should be the Lamb presented on that very spot, it was not perfect knowledge. Like Abraham, the saint may hope and trust in that Lamb in faith; but the "Cross he holds by towers beyond his sight." We can believe in and be thankful for the sufferings endured on that Cross, but no accumulation of the agonies of mind and body, of which we have some perception, can enable us to estimate that which purchased our Redemption. Most dimly do we "behold the Lamb;" but, at least, we know His Blood flowed for us.

Dull cold hearts and eyes they are that see so little way up the mount of sacrifice; but let us not turn away, but pray on, feeble and insufficient as are our prayers. For Christ allowed one who suffered the just punish-

ment of his own crime to hang beside Him on a cross like His, and accepted the penitence with which he submitted to what he deserved, as if it had been a free sacrifice. He blends all suffering willingly offered with His own height of woe, and listens to the faintest supplication.

Second Sunday in Lent.

AGAIN the two poems relate in some degree to the same subject, but the earlier one is on Remorse, the later on Repentance. "Esau's forfeit" is the sternest and most awful of all the "Christian Year," speaking as it does of the despair of ruined spirits. Be it remembered that although the latter poem strikes a tenderer key than the former one, yet it is only because of the difference of the subject. There was no one who held to the last a more deep and awful sense of the eternity of the doom of sin, or of the cruelty of trying to soften away the denunciations of God Himself, than did this true shepherd, stern in his sweetness.

So, as the echo of Esau's loud and bitter cry comes down these forty centuries to us, he asks, "Is there in God's world a place so dreary that the cry for mercy, and the voice of self-reproach, are vain as showers upon violets plucked?"

Alas! yes, threats unheeded accumulate against the day of reckoning; and consequences roll on regardless

of regrets. The tempest, into which the mariner has recklessly ventured, does not cease its fury because he laments his foolhardiness; the diseases incident on intemperance are not removed by the tardy repentance of the drunkard; the weapon once launched by the murderer is not averted by even his instant remorse. Did not consequence wait upon crime, the "unbodied soul" would have nothing to fear, however deeply stained, nor would the unready virgin be left lamenting without the door.

Yet if it were so, what would be the comfort of the contrite? His hope is in God's own word; but there, eternity of woe is as distinctly threatened as eternity of joy is promised, and if the one is doubted the other must likewise be doubted, the weakening the force of the one must weaken the force of the other; the fear and the hope are inseparable, while both rest on the same authority.

And that such is ever the course of God's dispensations, we may see by turning to the days of the patriarchs, where the profane act of faithlessly bartering the prime right to God's great promise, was requited by deprivation of it, when its value began to dawn on the reckless eyes. No tears would win back the blessing thrown away and disowned in a moment's impatient craving for food; the right to the unseen, sacrificed in longing for the tangible things present, could never be regained.

Such is our temptation "to barter life for pottage." "Wealth or power, pleasure or renown," are the present feast that invites us to throw aside our heavenly birthright; and there may be a time when, like those of the rich man in torment, our eyes will be opened to the madness of such a bargain, but opened in vain. Too late! the crown which might have been ours will have been given to him who knew how to prize it, and justice will be satisfied. God would not suffer Isaac's partial love to guide him to bestow the prophetic blessing on the unworthy, nor will He permit the faithless and profane to share the joys that they refused when they were on trial for them. "Meek true-hearted love" alone wins that blessing, as surely as

> "Isaac's fond blessing may not fall on scorn,
> Nor Balaam's curse on Love, which God hath blest."

This is a stern Lenten poem, grave, grey, and bracing as the keen still east wind that keeps the earth as it were iron-bound in its severity; but turn to the other book, and we are in the midst of the soft sweet whisperings of a spring night, rustling and tinkling through the very measure of the verse:—

> "How welcome, in the sweet still hour,
> Falls on the weary heart,
> Listening apart,
> Each rustling note from breeze and bower;

The mimic rain 'mid poplar leaves,
The mist drops from th' o'erloaded eaves,
Sighs that the herd half-dreaming heaves,
Or owlet chanting his dim part;
Or trickling of imprison'd rill
Heard faintly down some pastoral hill,
His pledge, Who rules the froward will
With more than kingly power, with more than wizard art."

Even as the ear is refreshed by these faint sounds at night, so the angels love to gather the repentant sighs of sinners, who, after their hot encounter, have time to perceive their errors. And as it is sweet to watch the shadows of light clouds on the gentle waves of the summer sea, so the saints around the glory throne, hopefully mark the faint sighs and yearnings of the contrite. A child's repentance, above all, is beautiful, so deep and true for a sin of so much less deep a dye. When a child voluntarily deprives itself of pleasure, in penitence for its error, surely it is highly blessed in that the great lesson is so early learnt, and repentance won without previous deep stain. And well it is also with elder penitents, hiding deep contrition beneath outward activity, or even splendour, like the sackcloth under robes of state, the sharp-edged cross beneath the jewels. These, day by day and year by year, look back on their past with deepening fear, as their hatred of sin and sense of its foulness increases, and yet they ever look forward more hopefully, with greater faith in the eternal pardon.

Good Joshua Watson was wont to say, that in his youth the fervent expressions of contrition and self-abasement he found in books of devotion appeared to him unreal in his own mouth, since he had never been guilty of heinous sins; but as life advanced, his abhorrence of evil in himself and his loathing for it so increased, that in his latter days these confessions became the sincere voice of his heart.

"The world cannot understand the penitence of the saints;" and therefore, many will never know how the holier a man became, the deeper became his spirit of repentance: no bitter cry, like Esau's; but a sweet fragrance of intense love, longing for perfection, and tenderness at all that transgressed the law of One so beloved.

Such penitence is inded, in the sight of Heaven,

> "Fresher than steam of dewy grove,
> When April showers are twinkling nigh."

Third Sunday in Lent.

THIS is one of the grandest and most finished compositions in the whole "Christian Year;" but it is one, the scope of which can hardly be understood except by a somewhat scholarly mind.

The text is the parable of the strong man armed, and the stronger than he, who taketh from him all his

armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. The application is to the victory over Satan, and the consecration of those treasures of the yearning classic world which once belonged to the kingdom of the prince of this world, but now are the enjoyment of the Christian. Before the Gospel was proclaimed, poets and philosophers were struggling towards the truth, and the words and forms of beauty that expressed these yearnings are, now that Satan's dominion is overthrown, replete with bright and holy thoughts to the believer. So even his own region of heathen fable has been won from Satan, and become our spoil[c].

Perhaps the first draft of this poem expressed the idea with greater distinctness, and it went more into details, though as a whole it was less finished. It was in four-line stanzas, without the two longer lines that now conclude them. It opened in the same manner, with the fall of Lucifer; but it was without that simile, carried through three exquisite descriptive verses, of the Israelites obtaining the spoil of Canaan. In lieu of this, the now consecrated but once heathen symbols are enumerated in lines we would not willingly lose.

"The Laurel from the conqueror's brow,
Thy righteous arm entwined,
For him whose deeds sure triumph shew
O'er his own heart and mind.

[c] Such books as Anstice's "Greek Choric Poems," Isaac Williams's "Christian Scholar," and Gladstone's "Homer," bear ample witness to this.

"The Myrtle wreath from Beauty's grove,
Thou gav'st to chastity,
For surely they are most in love
Who love but only Thee.

"Or if upon earth's darksome breast
They find some spirit rare,
Which, bright and true beyond the rest,
Gives back Thine Image fair;

"With thankful, not adoring gaze,
'Tis theirs to look and muse
How glorious the meridian blaze,
If such the twilight hues.

"With Ivy, meed of learned brows,
That scan the heaven's height,
Fix where the unseen comet glows,
And count the speed of light,

"Thy thoughtful temples now are drest,
Meek-souled humility;
To thy dove's eyes appear confest
The secrets of the sky.

* * * * *

"To Love is given to win and wear
The poet's crown of bays;
To trace in bards and sages rare
Their unintended praise.

"What first was earthly and profane,
Since Thou hast claimed Thy right,
Is turned into a sacred strain
By touch of gospel light."

These allusions are now merely touched on in the stanza,—

> "The olive wreath, the ivied wand,
> 'The sword in myrtles drest,'
> Each legend of the shadowy strand
> Now wakes a vision blest;
> As little children lisp, and tell of Heaven,
> So thoughts beyond their thought to those high Bards were given."

Perhaps they were altered because authority for the application of the ivy to astronomers of old, and to humility now, is not easy to trace, and the verse on it is evidently imperfect; perhaps, also, the whole construction of the poem was re-cast in consequence of Hurrell Froude's criticism (see a letter in his "Remains") on some of the poetry being "Sternholdy and Hopkinsy," an imputation to which its present form certainly is not liable. The final verse—

> "There's not a strain to Memory dear,
> Nor flower in classic grove,
> There's not a sweet note warbled here,
> But minds us of Thy Love,"

—is of the original; but the two added lines give a still deeper and more universal significance:—

> "O Lord, our Lord, and spoiler of our foes,
> There is no light but Thine: with Thee all beauty glows."

A very different note is struck in the poem in the *Lyra*, on "Ill Temper." It is a meditation for the

benefit of those concerned with children, on the two "evil spirits" that form the special torment and temptation of their otherwise happy age, namely sullenness and passion, compared in the two first verses to the hard, sunless, pitiless, grey frost, and to the wild and furious storm. In each case the sun is there, and one change of wind would render all bright and cheery; and

"So waits the Lord behind the veil."

To Him then should the dumb, deaf, sullen spirit of the child be borne by urgent intercessions, remembering how He cast out such from the possessed on earth. And in like manner, the passionate temper is likened to the frenzied boy, whose father waited at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration.

Raffaelle's conception of that scene was dear to the author; and there is a striking sentence in his Prelections, in which he vindicates the poetical propriety of the juxtaposition of the Transfiguration above, with the ravings below, as shewing the true calm of the Kingdom of Heaven close to the wild distresses of earth. Here the same idea is present, and is brought forward for the encouragement and comfort of such as feel anger an absolute overmastering force, so driving out all power of resistance for the moment, as to bring them to despair. He bids them "wait untired" in prayer, and patience, and resolution.

"Believe, and all may be."

The same hand that tamed the lunatic youth will drive back the fierce spirit of wrath, and give the victory at last. Has not baptism been the pledge of grace to conquer? and

"Within thee, if thou wilt, be sure
That happy hour's strong spells endure,
The seal of heaven, not all outworn."

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

RESERVE, reverent reserve, was ever a characteristic of the teaching of the school of divines of which the "Christian Year" was the first utterance. Those who had gone before them, in their burning zeal to proclaim the central truth of the Gospel, had obtruded it with little regard to the season of speaking, or the frame of mind of the hearer; and moreover, there was a habit of testing the sincerity of personal religion by requiring that its growth should be constantly proclaimed and discussed with great fulness of detail.

The deep mind, whose volumes of thought and feeling, even while they required expression, retired from the curious gaze, could not but shrink from all irreverent display and analysis of either holy things or private feelings; and "the Rose-bud," as this poem is called, is his veiled protest, which found a longer echo and com-

ment in the Tract for the Times, "On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge," where Isaac Williams shewed how in mercy to the hardened Jew, the full brightness of our Lord's teaching was withheld from the unbelieving ear, and reserved for the faithful few. This poem, though with the germ of the tract in it, is, however, chiefly aimed at the impatient scrutiny to which some would subject the religious sentiments of those for whom they are concerned.

In exquisite poetry, then, he shews how secret is the progress of the fairest works of nature—the rose-bud, never actually seen to open; the star, that appears we know not how; the rosy bloom, that comes while we are not watching for it, on the pale cheek of recovery. And surely the sweetest of blossoms, the brightest of stars, the purest, deepest glow,—

"Love, the last best gift of Heaven"—

may well be more secret in her growth than any of these! Human love itself is often deepest where least demonstrative; how much less can heavenly love bear to be intruded on by rude questions, when her growth is so still and secret that the heart that really is most full thereof is least aware of its own happy part. The beauty of love in a human soul is hidden from all save God—even as the Scripture veils from us the most wonderful moments that earth has seen—the moment

of the resurrection of our Lord, and the meeting between Him and His holy Mother. There, in those wondrous hours, the Holy One, God and Man, has veiled Himself from us by giving us no description of what was awfully sacred, and, as it were, personal. It is with Him as it was with His type,

"Old Israel's long-lost son,"

when in the supreme moment of discovering himself to his brethren, "he sought where to weep, and entered into his chamber and wept there." "That the secret things belong unto the Lord" is true, not only of heavenly mysteries above, but of the work of grace in the soul; and it must be treated reverently; there must be no impatient demands of, no forcing of, confidences; the precious bud must not be torn open, but left

"in her own sweet noon
To flourish and abide."

The *Lyra* poem is on the Gospel for Refreshing Sunday, on the fact that it was a young lad whose simple gift of loaves and fishes supplied the feast for the multitude. A stained-glass window, with this for its subject, the offering in like manner of a "young lad[d]," seems to have been the suggesting motive of the verses, picturing the boy's joy at the acceptance of his gift, and its wondrous effects, and then passing on to the individual application—

[d] The late Marquess of Lothian in the church at Jedburgh.

"Bring Him thy best; who knows but He
For His eternal board
May take some gift of thee?"

A small childish gift, a young child's prayer when committed to Him, may—nay, does—in His hands expand into the widest, most universal blessings, even as that "stripling's store" not only fed the thousands on the grass, but became the type of that Bread that giveth everlasting life:—

"Where Angels might adore,
And souls for ever feed."

Fifth Sunday in Lent.

THE poem entitled in the *Lyra Innocentium* "Shyness," almost continues the meditation inspired by the secret tears of Joseph, as we find it in the "Christian Year" on the Fourth Sunday. As, then, the poem on reverence to religious reserve ended with—

". . . let the dainty rose awhile
Her bashful fragrance hide—
Rend not her silken veil too soon,
But leave her, in her own soft noon,
To flourish and abide;"

so this one takes up the strain:—

"Tear not away the veil, dear friend,
Nor from its shelter rudely rend

The heaven-protected flower:
It waits for sun and shower
To woo it kindly forth in its own time,
And when they come, untaught will know its hour of prime."

It is, however, shyness rather than absolute reserve that these lines deal with—shyness, often so unmercifully treated, but which is here so tenderly pleaded for and described:—

"The lowly drooping brow, the stammering tongue,
The giddy wavering thought, scarce knowing right and wrong."

And no better practical comment can be found on the effects of such encouraging tenderness than the following personal experience:—

"I was called to appear before him for examination; and those who have undergone that awful ordeal (public examination in the Schools at Oxford), will well recollect the alternations of hope and fear that used to prevail in our breasts on that occasion. John Keble witnessed my anxiety, and he took an early opportunity of whispering words which revived hopes that were almost extinct, and gave me fair reason to suppose that I should attain the object of my labours. You will not be surprised then that I regard his memory with genuine admiration and affection."

He who, after the lapse of fifty years, thus warmly and gratefully dwelt on the kindly encouragement that had aided him through "the awful ordeal" of early

youth, was no other than the first man in the English Church, Charles Longley, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had come to Oxford to do honour to the friend of his youth only a few months before he too went to his rest.

But it is not only because impatience would destroy and blight buds of promise that the poem pleads for forbearance. It is for a deeper reason. The poet dares not affirm, but hints the question whether the reverence that the gaze of old age naturally inspires in the young may not be a shadow of our awe beneath the Almighty gaze that ever rests on us? For those who feel the deepest reverence, rise the highest in the end.

> "Hide thou thy face, and fear to look on God,
> Else never hope to grasp the wonder-working rod."

Moses began by hiding his face, in fear to gaze with bold eagerness, while he most felt the awful eye upon him. In reverence and godly fear he heard his mission announced, and then went forth on it. When he came back to the very mount where he had so knelt in overpowering awe, it was to speak with God face to face, to behold His glory, and bear back such traces thereof on his own countenance, that priest and people should shrink from the holy brightness of his gaze, even as he had shrunk from the manifestation of God in the burning bush.

With such an example, shewing that all that is holy must begin in awe, let us beware of interference—let us respect the secret depths of the hearts of others—let us not drag their confidences to light; but let the work grow and deepen out of sight, and let us heed the warning—

"O mar we not His work, who trains His saints in awe!"

We have begun with the later poem, because it seems like a conclusion to "the Rose-bud," telling us *how* the rose may expand; but the elder one is a very memorable one, being a grand summary of the Jewish history, as it begins from this day's Lesson. Old classical fashions are followed in the opening. The muse of history everywhere else records human doings; here we have the works of God. A comparison is made of the student suddenly arrested by the remarkable difference between the history of divinely-conducted Israel, and that of the waste world besides; to the shepherd Moses thoughtlessly wandering in the desert, until struck and arrested by the Divine portent of the burning Bush. Then, all absorbed, he listens to God's voice and worships.

So should the student, often in like manner a shepherd of Christ's flock, when struck by the light of the Divine judgments upon Zion, wait to watch and heed the awful lesson.

The fire and blaze that Moses beheld at this first

opening of Israelitish history are compared to the great enlightening brightness that has rendered that one people known as an example of warning to the whole world, while they themselves are like "burning brands" seared by God's wrath, yet not destroyed.

> "Lost branches of the once-lov'd vine,
> Now wither'd, spent, and sere,
> See Israel's sons, like glowing brands,
> Toss'd wildly o'er a thousand lands
> For twice a thousand year."

"Slay them not, lest My people forget it," is fulfilled in them; and they remain as a beacon to warn the Church of the meed of apostasy, or like ghosts, flitting in the dark round their much-loved home. Who can hear of the "wailing place of the Jews" without thinking of this line?

Surely if the angels look down on the way of the nations on earth—and we may believe that angels do watch God's dealings there—they can scarce see such strange contrasts anywhere as in this

> "hopeless faith and homeless race,
> Yet seeking the most holy place,
> And owning the true bliss!"

The nation lives on indestructible as though "salted with fire," as if to shew how lost spirits can exist in endless death—a thought terrible indeed, but one not safe to lose.

Yet even in the midst of voices of judgment there is the voice of mercy—just as of old God spoke from the fire in the bush to say that He had come down to deliver His people. He is ready to accept them. He came down long ago to break their chain, if they would only believe it.

There may perhaps never be a national restoration of them. The Jewish Temple will never more rise at Jerusalem, nor will it be needed; for the true Jerusalem, the true Sion, is wherever Christians,

> "His own true Israel,
> Shall own Him strong to save."

One by one, wherever throughout the world they allow their hearts to be touched, and the veil to be taken from their eyes, He redeems them, or rather they accept His redemption—they own the Lamb, and pass out of their bondage and captivity.

One by one, few and far between indeed, are such acceptances. Yet light shone on Joseph Wolfe as he read the wonderful fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and he knew the true Deliverer; and conviction darted into Alphonse Ratisbonne's heart as he aimlessly wandered in the church at Rome, followed (it would seem) by the prayers of a departing saint who had heard of his doubts, and who commended him to God, without having seen his face. Such cases give us hope that more and more of God's own people, St. Paul's brethren for whom

he would fain have given himself, may yet "believe and be saved."

Meantime, for ourselves, let us gaze with awe-struck eye, remembering that we are now what that unhappy people once were, the chosen and favoured—meeting with God, and therefore treading on holy ground where we must "keep our foot," and fear to offend.

Palm Sunday.

THE Palm Sunday song in the "Christian Year" is one of those remarkable meditations on the sacred vocation of the bard, which seem involuntarily to burst from almost all true poets, and which might be compared at some length with advantage; but at the present moment we will only allude to Milton and Tennyson, as having both dwelt on the thought of the immortal office of the poet. Here comes the same idea, but with the characteristic humility of the man he does not consciously rank himself as a poet, but breaks forth in an exhortation to those who have the sacred fire within them—sacred, we say advisedly, not in mere repetition of an oft-used phrase. For was not poetry the form in which prophecy was delivered of old? and is it not still, like all other powers, a gift of the Holy Ghost?

And yet how often has it been a misused gift! Looking back at the poetry which stood prominently forward

in the history of English literature and taste forty or fifty years ago, the names of Dryden and Pope stand foremost among the standards of taste; Byron was exercising a perilous fascination over the contemporary youth; and that Mr. Keble was greatly moved with the force, fire, and musicalness of the latter, may be heard in the ring of more than one of his own poems. It seems as though it were under the burning sense of grief and sorrowful indignation at the glorious powers wasted and abused by men like Byron and Shelley, that the quiet Oxford scholar burst forth into the zealous protest:—

"Ye whose hearts are beating high
With the pulse of Poesy,
Heirs of more than royal race,
Fram'd by Heaven's peculiar grace,
God's own work to do on earth,
(If the word be not too bold,)
Giving virtue a new birth,
And a life that ne'er grows old—

"Sovereign masters of all hearts!
Know ye, who hath set your parts?
He who gave you breath to sing,
By whose strength ye sweep the string,
He hath chosen you, to lead
His Hosannas here below;—
Mount, and claim your glorious meed;
Linger not with sin and woe."

Was there ever a grander exhortation, more magnificently setting forth the poet's true office? But then

comes the recollection that even if they should be silent, yet the song of praise would not therefore be wanting. Priests and Levites trained for a thousand years in the prophetic minstrelsy that David, Asaph, and the whole choir had stored up, to hail the Son of David when He should enter His city and His temple; these were murmuring, reviling, plotting, when the moment actually came, yet the greeting was not omitted. The children cried Hosanna, and had they been silent the very stones would have cried out. So the song ceases not;

> "Angels round His glory-throne,
> Stars, His guiding hand that own,
> Flowers, that grow beneath our feet,
> Stones in earth's dark womb that rest,
> High and low in choir shall meet,
> Ere His Name shall be unblest."

Then follows the prayer that God's minstrels may never fail meetly to echo the angel harps above, and that we "of meaner birth," devoid of the same powers, may at least have "grace to listen well." Yet should these inspired leaders of song pervert their gifts, like the Priests and Levites, and keep silence, or if they profane their powers by making them serve to "idol hymns," then he entreats that God will awaken the very stones, the "pavement of His shrine."

> "Till we, like Heaven's star-sprinkled floor
> Faintly give back what we adore:

Childlike though the voices be,
And untunable the parts,
Thou wilt own the minstrelsy,
If it flow from childlike hearts."

Such were the terms—as a stone of the earth, or as a child—on which he was content to offer his song of praise in the default of those of higher powers, little aware how entirely he was thus becoming a

"Sovereign master of all hearts!"

or doing a great work of God's own upon earth. However, in his own humility, he has so framed the verses, that while they express his genuine feeling, they also apply to us, who have no ability to do aught but "listen well," and respond in our hearts.

It seems strange to turn from an address to impassioned poets upon their high office to such simple words as

"Look westward, pensive little one;"

but in spite of the words being apparently spoken to a child, they are intended to apply to all, and are far more really adapted to this Sunday than is the earlier poem. The child is bidden to admire the sunset in all its glory—nay, but all the splendour of the skies is concealed from him by a "fluttering leaflet."

"One finger's breadth at hand will mar
A world of light in Heaven afar,
A mote eclipse a glorious star,
An eyelid hide the sky."

Somewhat the same thought has been expressed by the late Rev. Isaac Williams :—

"Upon the glass the creeping fly
Will shut out mightiest worlds on high ;
So care to thankless mortals given,
Will hide from us our God and heaven."

But here the comparison is of the evanescent glory of the sunset sky to some hour of special privilege, the Church services or sacraments. The fluttering leaf hides the sunset, the dreamy fancy occupies the mind, and so "the bright hour has passed away," the blessing is trifled with and lost. Who can fail to feel a pang of self-reproach at these words :—

"O shame, O grief, when earth's rude toys,
An opening door, a breath, a noise,
Drive from the heart th' eternal joys,
Displace the Lord of Love !
For half a prayer perchance on high
We soar, and heaven seems bright and nigh,
But ah ! too soon frail heart and eye
Sink down and earthward rove.

"The Sunday garment glittering gay
The Sunday heart will steal away."

So far every word and idea are as simple as possible, but the remedy is less evidently expressed—

"Thy precious robes unfold,
And cast before thy Saviour's feet :
Him spare not with thy best to greet,
Nor dread the dust of Sion's street,
'Tis jewels all and gold."

It is of course a reference to the garments that were cast on our Saviour's path; and it would appear to mean that the gay or rich garments—and in them of course is included all that ministers to our personal splendour or ease, all the "pomps and vanities" that are liable to distract our thoughts—should all in like manner be "cast before our Saviour's feet," i.e. be devoted to His glory, by being bestowed in His service, or in that of His poor. "The dust of Zion's street," which we are not to dread, would then be the outward humiliation, the wonder and censure of the world. This indeed would be "jewels all and gold"—gold of the Celestial City—to be found by stooping in self-abasement.

In this week of woe, the churches wear mourning attire, and we ourselves shrink from appearing in festal garb. But when the funeral days are over, and the temples of God again shine forth in full splendour for praise, for glory, and for beauty, shall our own adornment recur to our minds? Shall we not rather deprive ourselves in fearless sacrifice of thanksgiving? The exaltation of God should so dazzle us that we should prostrate ourselves. As the elders cast their crowns before the throne, so should we in our small and imperfect way feel that the more the glory of God beams on us, the more should we fall down before Him, offering Him all that is ours, or rather His. As in the Easter Epistle, the step from "If ye then be risen with Christ," is "Mortify your members that are on the earth."

Monday before Easter.

WITH a scholar's true love for Homer, the tender words of Andromache are repeated, when in the celebrated scene, where Hector's affection for his wife and child cast an unexpected tenderness over the warlike poem, she says, after relating the deaths of her father, mother, and seven brethren,—

> "But, Hector, thou to me art all in one—
> Sire, mother, brethren—thou, my wedded love!"

Such is a mere shadow of the love with which we should adore the Crucified.

What is dearest and most familiar may become indifferent to us; but He can never forget nor leave us alone.

To attempt to paraphrase or comment on the exquisite verses that follow, bringing home to us the sense of our Lord's individual care and love, would be useless and presumptuous. No one can read them without being carried along by their grave solemn sweetness and beauty, as they make us realize that it was not for an undistinguished herd of mankind, but for us—our individual selves, one by one—that our Lord interceded. Then comes the longing to feel ourselves on the immediate spot where these His intercessions took place; and therewith the reply, that,—

"fast as evening sunbeams from the sea
Thy footsteps all in Sion's deep decay
Were blotted from the holy ground: yet dear
Is every stone of hers; for Thou wast surely here."

And that yearning imagination, that we should be better or holier for such local adoration, and actual contact with the very spots where we know the Saviour to have knelt, is rebuked as a "self-flattering dream." For we have the comfort that the Gospel history of Gethsemane gives; and

"Who vainly reads it there, in vain had seen Him die."

The Monday of Holy Week, being the day of the cleansing of the Temple from those who sold and bought therein, is chosen as that for the poem on "Irreverence in Church," which warns the

"Child regenerate here of old,
And here for lowliest adoration come,"

against

"With bold eye and tone bringing the rude world here!"

We are called on to remember our blessed Lord's zeal for His Father's house, manifesting itself even in that last great week we are now commemorating. Thrice during that time He visited the Temple, as though to mark whether

"haply from the wrath decreed
He might redeem th' abode of His great Name."

The three times are described as

> "With silent warning Eye,
> With scourge in Hand, with doom of thrilling Prophecy."

It is St. Mark who makes it clear that on the Sunday eve, after the triumphal entry, He "looked about on all things in the Temple" with

> "that Eye so keen and calm,
> Like a still lamp, far searching aisle and shrine."

They were happy who owned and blest Him in that hour; and there was a blessing even for those who the next day may have yielded to His scourge, removed the worldly goods that profaned the sanctuary, and never brought them more. But the third day, when He parted from the Temple, it was with the dread prophecy of doom; as He sat on the mount with His disciples, the sentence was uttered on those who would only meet Him again on His judgment throne. He left only one blessing then—that on the widow,

> "Who only offer'd not amiss."

It was true, that the building for which she gave her mite was doomed, but "Love will abide the fire."

Thus there were three warnings—the look, the scourge of small cords, the sentence. So three degrees of warnings are given to sinners by the Church—the rebuke, the penance, the sentence. Or again, the irreverent

child is hushed by a look; in after life the remedy may be exclusion from the Holy Mysteries for a while. If repentance follows, it is well; if not, the doom is prepared. Alas for those who disregard the first and second!

Tuesday before Easter.

THE thought of this day is the refusal of our blessed Lord to drink of the opiate which the humane care of a society among the Jews was wont to provide to alleviate the sufferings of those under the hands of the executioner. True, the Incarnate Saviour, from the very perfection of His Manhood, would be more sensitive in His bodily frame than the rude and callous beings of more ordinary mould; and His human heart and feelings in like manner were at once the tenderest and the strongest that ever were contained in a mortal body. Moreover, He was exhausted with night watches, with the ineffable anguish of Gethsemane, the three trials in the early morning, and the insults and cruelty of the mob and soldiery; so that He had sunk under the weight of the heavy beam that He had been made to bear up the hill of Calvary, and it had been needful to assist Him on His way.

Yet He put away from Him the draught that might have dulled the sense of suffering; not as man will sometimes proudly dash aside any alleviation, but in

the resolution with which from the very first He had known all that was to be endured, when He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." The whole scale of suffering should be undergone, without aught in diminution:—

> "Thou wilt feel all, that Thou mayst pity all;
> And rather wouldst Thou wrestle with strong pain,
> Than overcloud Thy soul,
> So clear in agony."

And thus the sacrifice might be complete, and

> "E'en sinners, taught by Thee,
> Look Sorrow in the face,
> And bid her freely welcome, unbeguil'd
> By false kind solaces, and spells of earth."

Yet even in the depths of anguish willingly accepted, a solace can spring up after the pattern of the calmness, as that in which the prayer for the forgiveness of the murderers was uttered; the deep gladness that accepted the penitence of the thief on the cross, and the love mastering agony wherewith He resigned His soul unto His Father. Those who are willing to bear all for His sake without false solace, will find true solace even in the midst of agony.

In this awful week, there is an echo for every grief that has ever rent a human heart. Even while foretelling the ruin of cities and nations, our Lord has a word of tenderest compassion for the mother and the babe, just

as the fisherman's wife, while she seems to heed only the roar of the wind or breaking of the wave, is yet alive to every faint sound made by her sleeping babe. So in care and all-foreseeing pity, the Lord, when denouncing the destruction of Jerusalem, bids His little flock pray that their flight be not in winter, nor on the Sabbath day; and has compassion upon the nursing mother, sending, no doubt, His angels to strengthen her on the mountain, or shelter her in the valley. The prayer of helpless Faith never fails, but pray she must. He who holds the seasons in His hand, bade His disciples pray that their flight might not be in winter. He does indeed know what is well for us, but He requires of us to ask for it.

> "As parents teach their little ones to write
> With gentle-guiding finger, and delight
> The wish and prayer to mould, then grant the boon:—
> So are our prayers attuned to those above."

Prayer is the condition imposed upon us, for the obtaining of God's graces; and whereas the women of Jerusalem were warned beforehand to weep and pray for themselves and their children while yet there was time, so should the Christian mother early strive in prayer for her child, laying up her store of intercessions before the season of storms, using her week of life in toiling to win grace for him, ere the Sabbath rest of the grave come upon her.

For to defer till the door be shut and it be too late, must be horror unsurpassed, save by the finding that such remissness has led to the ruin of another.

"If to thy bosom clinging, child or mate,
Pupil or friend, the heaven-prepared room,
Tardy through thee, should miss, and share the hopeless
doom!"

Wednesday in Holy Week.

WHERE one poem is so grave and stern, the other so hopeful and soothing, as is the case with those of this day, it is natural to begin with the sadder one—the note of warning, prompted by the thought that this is the day of the betrayal.

"Judas' Infancy." For as surely as "by THE Child-bearing," by which God became Man, salvation hath come to us—as surely as "frail repenting Eve" kneels to receive pardon from the Seed of the woman, who hath brought home her many wandering children—as surely as the saints and martyrs venerate the blessed Virgin, as having been the instrument in whom the Word was made flesh—and

"Sure as her form for evermore
The glory and the joy shall wear,
That rob'd her, bending to adore
The Babe her chaste womb bare,—

as surely have babes been born to sin and woe; and there was once a bosom

> "Where Judas lay, a harmless Child,
> By gold as yet unbought."

And there is one more terrible even than Judas to arise in the latter days. As we understand prophecy, the Man of Sin, who is yet to be revealed, will be a mortal of human race—it may be, even as Judas was, admitted to the inmost Christian privileges. Who knows where he may arise? The last verse tells us why the horrible possibility is brought before us.

> "From the foul dew, the blighting air,
> Watch well your treasure newly won.
> Heaven's child and yours, uncharm'd by prayer,
> May prove Perdition's son."

"Uncharmed by prayer,"—here is the protection. Here may we remember the encouragement to St. Monica, so often repeated, "that the child of so many prayers could not be lost."

We are almost reluctant to touch on the poem that follows; to dwell on it in detail would be analyzing the parts of a newly-blown rose, and injuring something of its exceeding tenderness and beauty. We really dare not do more than point out that the main subject is submission to the will of God; and the blessing that springs therefrom, the blessing of following in the foot-

steps of the Saviour. For thus it is that the saints and martyrs have followed the Lamb, and won their crowns in virgin purity:—

"Nor deem, who to that bliss aspire,
Must win their way through blood and fire.
The writhings of a wounded heart
Are fiercer than a foeman's dart.
Oft in Life's stillest shade reclining,
In Desolation unrepining,
Without a hope on earth to find
A mirror in an answering mind,
Meek souls there are, who little dream
Their daily strife an Angel's theme,
Or that the rod they take so calm
Shall prove in heaven a martyr's palm."

And not only does this path of perfection lie through unnoticed suffering, but it may be likewise through pleasant paths of joy. Of the happy and blessed it is added,—

"if on high their thoughts are set,
Nor in the stream the source forget,
If prompt to quit the bliss they know,
Following the Lamb where'er He go,
By purest pleasures unbeguil'd
To idolize or wife or child;
Such wedded souls our God shall own
For faultless virgins round His throne."

So in every path of life we can find the footsteps of the Saviour; His Cross is the standard in all our conflicts. The point is not what kind of outward circum-

stances are ours, but whether we seek our own will, or bend to the will of God. In accepting that will, whether in grief or joy, is alone perfect rest!

Thursday before Easter.

"THE Man of Loves" is the translation through the Septuagint of the words that in our version are, "a man greatly beloved;" the name by which the angel called the prophet Daniel, whose prayer, with the prophetic answer thereto, forms the first Lesson for this day.

He prayed for the holy mountain of the Temple, as it lay in ruins, and Judah in captivity, and his prayer was effectual. Would that we could pray with the same might of love for our own Israel, now sunk as low as Daniel's, though outwardly as fair and prosperous as Sion at greatest height of grandeur.

The Church indeed goes on extending:

> "'Tis true, nor winter stays thy growth,
> Nor torrid summer's sickly smile;
> The flashing billows of the south
> Break not upon so lone an isle,
> But thou, rich vine, art grafted there,
> The fruit of death or life to bear,
> Yielding a surer witness every day
> To thine Almighty Author and His stedfast sway."

But though the vine of the Church hath thus "stretched out her boughs unto the sea," too often there

are "grapes of gall" around her healthiest shoot, the wild grapes of evil deeds; and the heralds of God themselves are sometimes hirelings. For the world corrupts that of which it dares not (or durst not when this poem was written) openly cast off and disavow. "Pride and high-souled Reason" had not then come to open war with the Faith, whatever they have done now.

The question follows, What are we to do if we see far and wide that men own themselves Christians, yet are not the better for it? Have we not still our faith to seek? No indeed! What we have to do is to kneel on in devotion to Him who heareth the prayer, and to

"Strive to keep the lingering flame in our own breast alive."

On Daniel himself the future lowered heavily. His visions of the time to come were of a time of trouble unequalled—of suffering and persecution—of the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not—of the little horn casting down stars from heaven—of holy ones falling down, with none to help them—of the stream of fire issuing from before the Ancient of Days; and the assurance, which he alone of all the saints of old received in his lifetime, that "he should stand in his lot at the end of the days," was assuredly needed to sustain his heart through the visions of judgment that he beheld.

So then, to us in these latter times, the only balance for the fearful glimpses we get of the course of this world,

is attention to secure our own salvation; that, like Daniel,

> "So when th' Archangel's word is spoken,
> And Death's deep trance for ever broken,
> In mercy thou may'st feel the heavenly hand,
> And in thy lot unharm'd before thy Saviour stand."

No one can turn to the poems of this Maundy Thursday without remembering that it was on that day that the thinker of these thoughts, for the last time on earth, prayed for "the holy mountain of his God;" above all, for her unity; and that among the last words of unconsciousness that fell from his lips were some concerning "white flowers for the upper room." And here, in the *Lyra*, his heart is in that upper room. He is looking for a place for his babes; and he paraphrases those directions to the two disciples as the reply. Find the waterbearer; be led by him within the chosen city; find there the narrow gate, and seek the chamber,

> "Where the great Lord in royal state
> Shall eat the Bread of His desire."

The way lies up a difficult stair, through sorrow and repentance.

> "The handmaid Penance hath been there,
> And swept and garnish'd all the place."

This must be the heart into which the Lord will enter and hold His feast of grace; here, that we may feast with Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

So spake He; and we obediently sought the bearer of the pitcher of water; our babes were there bathed, and are led onward up the stair of the training of the Church, often glancing back to the healing fountain that sprang from His side; till we bring them to the chancel-arch, there bid them kneel for the seal of the Spirit on their brows, examine and prepare themselves, and then draw nigh to the feast in faith.

Of old, the Church (like the Greek Church now) brought her babes at once from the font to the altar, and accepted them as communicants from the first. Now, "a mournful instinct" withholds her, as if the tainting influence of the world made her fear to lead them on high at once, lest the greater privilege should make a fall the deeper.

Therefore, with his own humility and obedience, the poet acquiesces in the judgment of his Mother, and draws the consolation, that the longing for what is delayed, may enhance the earnestness and purity of "Faith's virgin sigh."

Good Friday.

THERE is much individual feeling in these stanzas, written out of the personal experiences of a time of sorrow and disappointed affection, comparatively early in life; and though this fact has rendered the poem

more difficult minutely to explain, it has given it a more deeply soothing and sympathizing effect.

Is it not strange, it asks, that the darkest hour that ever there was on earth should give more comfort to the mourner than the joyful days of the Incarnation, Resurrection, and coming of the Holy Ghost? It is so because beneath the Cross we find the bitter herbs of earth, such as are our own, and with them our own are

> "temper'd by the Saviour's prayer,
> And with the Saviour's life-blood wet,"

till

> "They turn to sweetness, and drop holy balm."

Yes, all our griefs turn to sweetness by that touch, and especially disappointment, or loss of friendship or of love.

In the sore moments of such pain comes the perception of what we never realized in more sunshiny moments —the anguish of our Lord, deserted and scorned, even as He still is in His lowly members upon earth—yea, as He has been, it may be, by ourselves in the hour of our triumph and prosperity. And what is our grief to His?

> "His piercèd hands in vain would hide
> His face from rude reproachful gaze,
> His ears are open to abide
> The wildest storm the tongue can raise,
> He who with one rough word, some early day,
> Their idol world and them shall sweep for aye away."

But while this exposure was added to all His other sufferings, we can shelter our griefs—even fancied ones—in some quiet lonely home

> "Where gentlest breezes whisper souls distress'd,
> That Love yet lives, and Patience shall find rest."

And from that contrast between our slight sufferings and our Lord's unapproachable agony, arises the sudden cry of shame upon ourselves,

> "That souls in refuge, holding by the Cross,
> Should wince and fret at this world's little loss."

And therewith ensues that deep earnest supplication and self-dedication :—

> "Lord of my heart, by Thy last cry,
> Let not Thy blood on earth be spent—
> Lo, at Thy feet I fainting lie,
> Mine eyes upon Thy wounds are bent,
> Upon Thy streaming wounds my weary eyes
> Wait like the parchèd earth on April skies.
>
> Wash me, and dry these bitter tears,
> O let my heart no further roam,
> 'Tis Thine by vows, and hopes, and fears,
> Long since—O call Thy wanderer home ;
> To that dear home, safe in Thy wounded side,
> Where only broken hearts their sin and shame may hide."

On that eve of Good Friday, when the tidings were brought to Mrs. Keble that the pains of death were ended and eternal life begun, she turned to these two stanzas, and told those about her that in them they

could see what must have been the last thought and prayer of him who then was just gone from us.

The thought he has left for mothers upon this day is one to bear them through the misery of seeing the suffering of infants, when they are tempted to declare themselves willing indeed to endure, but questioning and almost rebellious at the sight of the pain of the sinless babe. Such a mother is bidden to turn her eyes to the hill of Calvary, where—as the Saviour toiled beneath the "accursed and galling wood"—a stranger, "hastening Zionwards," was seized, and compelled to take part in bearing His Cross. Who knows whether in heart he was on the side of the persecutors of the Victim—whether he hated the burthen, or rejoiced so to bear it with the Lord? The unseen hosts of angels and devils watched around. Was he like the Raven or the Dove? Surely the Cross itself, and the treading in the footsteps of our Lord, must have so melted his spirit that he ever learnt more and more of his "sweet awful load," the instrument of redemption. So with all on whom suffering is laid! Even to the infant, these unconscious pains give a share in

> "The Cross that maketh whole.
> The tottering feet upon the way of sorrow led"

are verily following the Saviour, for they are His; and if the little hand find that the crown on the Saviour's brow is indeed thorns, yet

"Who but would joy, one drop should fall
Out of his own dull veins, for Him who spared us all?"

The thought underlying all, is that the baptized infant so entirely belongs to the great Head to whom it is united, that all the pains it can undergo—incapable as it is of murmuring or rebellion—are assuredly its own share in the Cross-bearing, and therefore blessed in themselves, and working for it a greater weight of glory.

Easter Eve.

"THE worst is o'er," the pains of death are over, and the rest in the grave is begun. The mystery is not revealed, whether that interval were indeed spent in sleep, or whether the most holy soul were "at large," "free" among the dead; whether in the region of joy waking Abraham to rejoice, or in some drearier scene preaching to the spirits in prison, and setting them free by the ransom newly paid.

Wherever our Redeemer was, with Him we know was the happy soul of the penitent thief, even as we trust each of us may be. For does not each Christian hang on his cross, watching the Saviour, till we learn like that penitent to say, "We suffer justly the punishment of our sins, only, O Lord, remember me when Thou comest to Thy kingdom." And that lesson learnt, we shall be taken to His rest, there to wait till the number of His

elect be accomplished, and His full kingdom be come. Then shall we return with Him,

"Again with earth to blend,"

both in our own risen and purified bodies, and in the "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

In the meantime, what blessed intercourse may there not be with those whom we have never known in the flesh, but whom we may then be able to thank for the aid they have left us in these our days of bondage to the flesh, their words of hope and exhortation, and their bright examples.

But in the midst of thus realizing and longing for that future Sabbath the chastened temper pauses, and in fear of presumption returns from aspiration to the actual present. For though we are now in the stony wilderness, Christ, "my Dove that" is "in the clefts of the rock" (Cant. ii. 14), is still with us, can bring "water-springs out of a dry ground," and "streams in the desert" for the good and true. In a verse of extraordinary beauty we are thus exhorted:—

"When tears are spent, and thou art left alone
With ghosts of blessings gone,
Think thou art taken from the cross, and laid
In JESUS' burial shade;
Take Moses' rod, the rod of prayer, and call
Out of the rocky wall
The fount of holy blood; and lift on high
Thy grovelling soul that feels so desolate and dry."

For thou art in this rocky wilderness of a world, a prisoner of hope, who should turn and look to the stronghold of Zion above, singing in hope of the promise of the future. Joseph, his father's darling, lay imprisoned in the pit, not knowing how he should be saved, but sure that God would save him, and so "a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." For this is what it is to be "buried with Christ in baptism by His death," to be dead with Him to this world, and our life hidden with Him.

A short spring-tide poem follows, redolent of that evening calm that often falls on Easter Eve, full of the delicate scent of primroses,—

> "As bright and quiet all things seem
> As if no heart on earth could ache."

And yet how awful was the gloom of the day before; but our calmness is no slight to Him, for we know that our joy of to-morrow no man taketh from us; and therefore well may earth blossom all over with her choicest store, the thyme and violet even upon the grave. And the little child—a still purer blossom—baptized into participation in the blessings of the eternal rest, is innocent enough fitly to mingle in the peaceful cheerfulness of the day. But so to continue must be the work of fast and prayer, for it can only be by "mortifying our evil and corrupt affections," that "through the grave and gate of death" we may pass to our joyful resurrection.

A third, and exceedingly beautiful Easter Eve poem, was composed for the Salisbury Hymnal, and is much more entirely an invocation and hymn.

"Father and Lord of our whole life,
As Thine our burden and our strife,
As Thine it was to die and rise,
So Thine the grave and Paradise."

The most remarkable verse is

"Dread Preacher, who to fathers old
Didst wonders in the gloom unfold;
Thy perfect creed O may we learn
In Eden, waiting Thy return."

Easter Day.

NOTHING is apparently more difficult than to compose an Easter hymn. The day itself, and its own services, are so surpassingly glorious, that poetry is at fault when it would enhance upon them, and the really best of Easter songs is so only from its simplicity:—

"JESUS CHRIST is risen to-day,
Our triumphant holy-day."

Something of the ring of "Our triumphant holy-day" seems to echo in "O day of days;" but this is more of a poem than a hymn. The three first verses dwell on the greatness of Easter joy, the Resurrection day being reflected in the Lord's day, "the Easter Day of every

week," and the week-days being thereby brightened, so that all time has become dedicated to holy joy, ever since the year of release began.

Let our soul, then, wake early to share the joy, unlike the dull-eyed worldling who merely rises to attend to its own interests, and cares only for what is material. Easter is nothing to him; and when he sees Christians acting on faith, he taunts them with living in a dream, and having nothing substantial to shew as a motive for their joy.

But the Christian's answer is that

> "Our crown, our treasure is not *here*:"

it is the very essence of our joy that it is beyond this earth, and in eternal glory.

> "'We watch not now the lifeless stone;
> Our only Lord is risen and gone.'
>
> "Yet e'en the lifeless stone is dear
> For thoughts of Him who late lay here;
> And the base world, now Christ hath died,
> Ennobled is and glorified."

The idea here is that whereas the mere carnal man values the world for its own sake, and looks no further, the Christian gazes far beyond the world, after his risen Lord, and yet does not despise the world, because in it Christ lived, for it He died, from it He rose again, and thus it is ennobled and glorified, even as was His

sepulchre. This earth has become no longer a charnel-house, the place of death and ruin for Adam's doomed race; but

"Th' imprisoning stone is roll'd away,"

the gates of everlasting life "have been opened to us," and, like the sepulchre, it is now a cell echoing with the glad tidings, "Christ is risen," and where angels whisper to mourners that the grave is but "the place where Jesus lay." Or again, it is a temple, where a loving heart can everywhere find our Lord adored and shrined, and meet with precious memorials of Him wherever she turns. Such joy was vouchsafed to Magdalen, the first to meet that exceeding joy in the midst of her tears, and to the three faithful women whom He met as they were bearing the tidings of His resurrection to the disciples. And we may share their bliss and tread in their steps, for Christ will reveal Himself to the heart of love-mourning in solitude, as well as to those who bear forth the good tidings with hearts filled with charity. As, then, time has become one great Easter Day, so the earth has become one great Easter sepulchre, and each Christian a glad messenger of the Resurrection, seeing Him by faith.

Turn we to the exulting song in triumphant measure, which in the earlier stanzas proclaims through the joyful narrative, comparing His birth to His resurrection, and then passing on to those who partake the sorrow of the

night, and the joy which came in the morning. It seems to continue the thought with which the former hymn closed, of finding counterparts for Christians of all times in those who first gathered around the holy tomb; penitents, schooling themselves for the sight of His glory by the contemplation of His death, like the Magdalen; other penitents, like Peter, who had failed even while he loved much, and therefore seeing at first only the grave-clothes, so as to convince the mind, ere the joy came to the heart; and others in full innocence, able at once to "behold, rejoice, believe."

Then comes a personal application, spoken to the innocent child who is addressed in the poem. "Dearest, be such thy portion," and but still approach in reverence, taking home the fulness of awe and blessing.

"Thou know'st He died not for Himself, nor for Himself arose:
Millions of souls were in His Heart, and thee for one He chose.
Upon the palms of His pierc'd Hands engraven was thy name,
He for thy cleansing had prepar'd His water and His flame.'
Sure thou with Him art risen: and now with Him thou must go forth,
And He will lend thy sick soul health, thy strivings, might and worth."

Risen with Him in baptism, having at the third hour received the Holy Spirit, the young Christian then is to tread in the steps of his Lord Himself, meeting Him, as it were, again and again. And as our Lord assuredly

revealed Himself at once to the blessed Virgin, His mother, so the young Christian hails the Divine Image first in his parents, then feels His presence from time to time, as did Peter in his penitence, Magdalen in her grief, or the three in their obedient haste; again, "in the breaking of bread," like those at Emmaus, and in the evening of life receiving His blessing in the assembly of saints.

The thought of constant meetings with the risen Lord, with whom we ourselves are risen, is most beautiful, but it is expressed with a little involvement. The appearance of our Lord to His blessed Mother is not mentioned in Scripture; but St. Ignatius and other fathers of old spoke of the fact as a secret veiled by the reserve of Scripture, (as it is treated in the "Christian Year"—Fourth Sunday in Lent,) and this is called even in one of our own Christmas carols one of the "good joys St. Mary had." Thus the Spouse, the Church, knows that so it must have been. This is the argument in the sixth stanza.

Monday in Easter Week.

MOST of those who have known the "Christian Year" from childhood agree in regarding this as one of their first loves, though it has no particular applicability to the day, save such connection as is afforded by the

Resurrection proclamation in the portion of Scripture that is used as the Epistle being taken from St. Peter's discourse to Cornelius. The verses themselves were written independently of the day, and were, we believe, inspired by a visit to the spot where the sources of the Thames and Severn lie within so short a compass.

To watch the little rippling fountain, see the waters flow on out of sight, and think how they gather depth and force; how they meet other streams, become the blessing and the bulwark of the lands on their banks, and close their lives in the ocean; all this seemed to him a parable of the silent growth of prayer, rising first from a single Christian heart, but met on its way to heaven by multitudinous like petitions, and forming at last a flood of that intercession which God has willed should take heaven by violence, and rising in praise "a chant of many parts."

And what better instance can be found than Cornelius, the Roman soldier, praying in his villa at Cæsarea, for fuller light to shine on a mind (mayhap) disgusted with paganism, dissatisfied with philosophy, and perceiving the unattainable perfection of the theory of Judaism; and at the same time the ardent simple-hearted Apostle, at Joppa on the house-top beside the glittering Mediterranean, praying to know his Lord's will. Each was perfectly ignorant of the prayer of the other, yet God joined them together; they were brethren

in heart even then, and now they see the fruit of their prayers in the millions of redeemed Gentiles who enter the gate that Cornelius was the first to pass. If he ever —as a Roman—won the oak-leaf crown for saving a fellow-citizen's life, that moment's joy was far less precious to him. And what were all rewards of the favoured veterans to this happiness?

The other poem is one of the most characteristic of the *Lyra*, with a charming description of the infant's first awakening, the moment's start of uneasiness quelled at first sight of the mother or nurse, and then a comparison to the wakening on the first Easter morning, the desolateness of love figured by the Magdalen when she only knew her Lord was gone, and knew not how close He was to her, till He called her by name—by name, that special mark of grace. So again, as the infant's first gesture is to spread his arms towards his nurse, so Mary would have clung to her new-found Lord. But she is withheld by the mysterious words, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father."

"Love with infant's haste would fain
Touch Him and adore,
But a deeper holier gain
Mercy keeps in store.
'Touch Me not: awhile believe Me:
Touch Me not till heaven receive Me,
Then draw near and never leave Me,
Then I go no more.'"

Here indeed is an allusion to the great truth that no bodily contact with our Lord, while yet on earth, can be so near or so deep as that which by His Holy Spirit, and in His blessed Eucharist, subsists between His ascended Body and the faithful here below.

Tuesday in Easter Week.

THE locality of the isle of snow-drops is curiously doubtful. Mr. Keble himself in his later days looked for the islet in the River Test which he thought he had meant, but could not identify it. Probably, after the wont of rivers, the Test had given and taken a good deal to and from his islands in the lapse of forty years.

However this may be, the snow-drop—as the blossom of promise—evokes a strain of musing on our eagerness to grasp the fair promises of spring in contrast with our want of faith as regards the hints of Christian hope, comparing ourselves to the mass of disciples, to whom the words of the women who were early at the sepulchre "seemed as idle tales." They were but women, and may have been despised for simplicity and credulity, even as the "wise in their own conceit" are too apt to despise the innocent undoubting assurance of those who cannot reason;

> "But where, in gentle spirits, fear
> And joy so duly meet,
> These sure have seen the angels near,
> And kiss'd the Saviour's feet."

These are the pure childlike spirits who have proved the joy of faith in Christ risen; and again the same experience is manifested among the suffering poor, who full often have penetrated deeply into the mysteries of faith, and speak high things in their unconscious might of faith.

> "O guide us, when our faithless hearts
> From Thee would start aloof,
> Where Patience her sweet skill imparts,
> Beneath some cottage roof:
>
> "Revive our dying fires, to burn
> High as her anthems soar,
> And of our scholars let us learn
> Our own forgotten lore."

"Of our scholars let us learn," might have been the motto of the *Lyra*; and the poet, in the poem called "Loneliness," was learning of a little boy, who was making a visit at Hursley Vicarage, his first absence from his own well-peopled nursery and from his parents. The dreary feelings of a child in a strange place came upon him, and he was frightened. Mrs. Keble offered to read to him. He begged "it might be something true;" and when she brought the Bible, was satisfied. Such was the incident versified in the earlier stanzas, and then compared to the hush and calm that fell on the Apostles when they knew that what they had deemed a phantom was their Lord walking on the sea. Now even as then,

the sense of His presence realized is enough to dispel all terrors, whether the eerie imaginary alarms of childhood, or the more substantial, yet in truth equally imaginary, fears and anxieties of after years. Thus on Easter night there was fear when the Apostles deemed that a spirit was amongst them, but were full of peace and strength when they knew that it was His very self.

> "Him name in Faith, and softly make
> The sign to Angels known.
> So never need thy young heart ache
> In silence and alone."

First Sunday after Easter.

THE first Sunday after Easter has no less than three poems by Mr. Keble, if we reckon with the others one in the Child's "Christian Year," which we believe is really one of his earliest poems. The subject of both this and of that in the *Lyra* is Faith—both alike being in accordance with the Epistle for the day, with its "victory that overcometh the world, even our faith;" and the proclamation of that faith in the words, "There are Three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One: and there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood."

The analogy between the witness in heaven and earth is the subject of the early poem we mentioned.

"Our God in glory sits on high :
Man may not see and live :
But witness of Himself on earth
For ever does He give."

That witness is the Holy Spirit in man's heart, the water of baptism, and the cleansing Blood by which the Holy Spirit purifies the soul therein; and again, it is "the all-atoning Blood" which by one Spirit we all drink of in the Cup; and the hymn concludes with an earnest prayer for faith to accept the witness of the three on earth :—

"O ! never may our sinful hearts,
What Thou hast joined, divide !
Thy Spirit in Thy mysteries still
For life, not death, abide !"

From this extremely deep meditation on the "inward and spiritual grace," seen by faith in the witness on earth, we pass to the *Lyra*, in which the poet seems at first to be, as it were, seeking for the meetest embodiment or personification of Faith, among those that have been chosen as her emblem in "banners bright and fair."

The Fidelia of his much-loved Spenser, and the usual emblem of Faith—as a virgin holding a cross, clouded below, but the summit lost in rays of light—come first to mind; and then a figure always dear to him, and a print of which was one of the decorations of his room—Domenichino's St. John—is described :—

"A calm Prophet's face, intent
To hear what God the Lord shall say,
Ere the dread tones be gone and spent.

"An Eagle from the deep of space
Is hovering near, and hastes to bring
(Meetest the unearthly tale to trace,)
A plume of his mysterious wing.

"A golden Chalice standing by,—
What mantles there is life or death;
A Dragon to the unpurgèd eye,
A Serpent from the Cross, to Faith."

This verse alludes of course to the dragon in the cup, which to surface observers merely suggests the story of the draught of poison assuming a serpent form at St. John's touch; but to the eye of faith is an allusion to Him of whom the brazen serpent was a type, and who comes, as it were, into the chalice—for life or for death to such as drink thereof.

But the poet looked from the rapt figure of Faith, and the mysterious adoring countenance of John the Divine, to a young child simply saying the Catechism, and therein rehearsing

"His chant of glory undefiled,
The Creed that with the Church was born."

The pensive reverence of the boy's countenance—no imaginary picture—but thoroughly real and individual, suggests the scenes that each clause calls up in turn:—

"The world new-fram'd, the Christ new-born,
The Mother-Maid, the cross and grave,
The rising sun on Easter morn,
The fiery tongues sent down to save,—

"The gathering Church, the Fount of Life,
The saints and mourners kneeling round,
The Day to end the body's strife,
The Saviour in His people crown'd."

Wonderful is this brief summary of the Creed; and this undoubting vision, unfolding itself before the quietly attentive and simple-hearted, is, he says, "Faith:"—

"And this is Faith, and thus she wins
Her victory, day by day rehears'd.
Seal but thine eye to pleasant sins,
Love's glorious world will on thee burst."

The boy's eye closed in attention suggested the

"Seal but thine eye to pleasant sins."

But that the writer himself had won or preserved that spiritual clearness of eye, which enabled him to realize thus wondrously, in living force, each sentence of our Belief, through the having thus resolutely sealed his own eye in his younger days, is evident from the companion poem. This is one written early in life, thoroughly personal, and bestowed upon this Sunday chiefly because in it was quoted Moses' argument to Korah in the morning first Lesson, on the privileges which as a Kohathite

Levite he already enjoyed. To understand the spirit of it, it must be recollected that John Keble's talents had, at a very early age, brought him to the summit of university distinctions, and that he could not fail to be conscious that it was within his power to achieve any earthly distinction that mental exertions could accomplish; but that he deliberately renounced any such career, and, when devoting himself to the sole service of his Master, did so in so entire a manner that his very success, and the fame he could not but obtain, absolutely worked against him, and kept him utterly undistinguished by any external honour. Some sense of what lay within his grasp, if he would turn his talent to the service of the world, rather than that of the Church; some passing sense of regret, some gleam of ambition, would then seem to have passed over him, and to have been repented and confessed in the lines that begin,

"First Father of the holy seed,"

which opens with an entreaty for pardon, in spite of the possible consequences of the neglect that the poet accuses himself of, to the souls under his care.

He compares himself to a hermit gazing with a moment's longing after the gallant hunters sweeping through the forest; but as often as the temptation came to join the ranks of the votaries of this world, and put forth

his hand to reach its distinctions, his better soul responded to the whispering voice,

> "My servant, let the world alone—
> Safe on the steps of Jesus' throne
> Be tranquil and be blest."

Then applying to himself the remonstrance of Moses, he recites the glorious tasks of the sacred office, first going through those of the Kohathite of old, then passing on to those of the Christian priest, to whom is transmitted that breath of Christ that imparted the authority of absolution, the keys of the kingdom :—

> "Who lead the choir where angels meet,
> With angels' food our brethren greet,
> And pour the drink of Heaven?"

From the greatness of the pastoral vocation he passes on to its peacefulness and soothing joy, striking a lower key, but coming home to many hearts where he observes that whereas men of other professions are incapacitated for them by sorrow, yet that the priest's office is his best comfort, his very life is the ministry of consolation. The happiness of the pastoral home is then dwelt on, no doubt with a thought of the much-loved house at Fairford, with all its influences :—

> "Alms all around and hymns within—
> What evil eye can entrance win?"

And the last verse is the sigh of one who knows that these home delights are but fleeting:—

"O joys, that sweetest in decay,
Fall not, like wither'd leaves, away,
But with the silent breath
Of violets drooping one by one,
Soon as their fragrant task is done,
Are wafted high in death!"

And was not this entreaty granted to him?

Nay, more—do we not see in this poem the struggle and renunciation that brings out the full meaning of the *Lyra's*

"Seal but thine eye to pleasant sins."

It was thus sealing his eye to "wild fancy's gallant train," and closing his ear to the bugle strain, that kept his vision clear to see the blessed pictures that the Creed unfolded to him.

Second Sunday after Easter.

NOWHERE has Mr. Keble drawn a grander scene than this—the would-be enchanter, but unwilling prophet, standing on the verge of the mountain, with floating hair, and eyes stretched to behold some mighty vision.

A mighty vision indeed it was, as Amalek, first of the nations—Moab—the wandering Kenites in their rock-built nest—Edom, Eber, Assur—the very ships of Chittim

—passed before him in review, and the ruin of each was predicted; yet without rousing the seer from his hopes of avarice. Not the sight of the future fate of all the kingdoms of the earth can shew him the true worth of Balak's rewards. As little can any bright sun or star in the whole range of heaven attract his eye from his selfish longings for preferment, as can the angel's sword or the Almighty word detach him from them by terror. His heart and hope alike lie below the range either of the inducements or the threatenings that should have diverted him from it.

"There shall come a star out of Jacob" were his words. That gentle Star we know full well—it is "the Day Star from on high that hath visited us;" and though Balaam knew it as the "token of wild war,"—"It shall smite all the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth," or confusion,—to us it is "the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" the bright and Morning Star, who will give Himself to him that overcometh.

For we are the heirs of those whom God had blessed, we have succeeded to the position of the chosen; and ours by right of our spiritual ancestry were the goodly tents and tabernacles on which he gazed with unwilling admiration, as they stretched like dark cedars beside the waters, while his seven altar-fires flared up in the darkness. And as morning rose, there still lay the tents in

their regular array; the sacred tabernacle, with the cloudy pillar in the centre, and each tribe marshalled around the "ensign of their father," the lion of Judah, the mountain bull of Ephraim, the water-bearer of Reuben, all evidently visible to him.

He watched these tents

> "till knowledge came
> Upon his soul like flame;"

not from the magic of his sorcery—but the true light from heaven, in one flash that died away at once in darkness.

How could he have helped fearing, whose curses were changed on his very tongue to blessings? Alas! he had sold himself to the world, and the world had bound him beyond all power of escape.

And this grand though fragmentary poem closes with a prayer that we who are so much nearer to the shrine than ever Balaam was, may grow in love up to His heavenly light.

The other poem for this day is full of depth, so partially expressed that there is some amount both of obscurity and abruptness in it. The title is, "Children with Dumb Creatures," and the thought running through it is upon the "mysterious sympathy" that certainly does exist between children and animals. The very infant will watch a fly or a bird more intently than any effort to amuse it; and on the other hand, how often instances

have been given of animals becoming suddenly gentle* when encountered by a little child. Every one has seen the tenderness of large dogs to little children, or heard of elephants tenderly protecting them; and again, of children lost in the woods being found fearlessly playing with bears; St. Ambrose is far from being the only instance of bees swarming round a babe without hurting him; and for "the war-horse treading full softly," we have just met with an authentic anecdote* of a runaway charger from Knightsbridge Barracks, who meeting his master's little boy in the midst of the wildest endeavours to escape the pursuit of the soldiers, actually made a leap into the air over the child's head, and thus avoided all injury to him.

Then comes the question—what can be the link between childhood and the animal world?

The Eastern sage would answer by the doctrine of transmigration, which might unite both child and creature by dim recollections of past lives in other beings; but the Christian has another answer. The baptized child has the purity of Adam before his fall, when the creatures waited around him. That purity brings back his dominion over the animals is the feeling that prompted the old fancy that an innocent maiden can lead about and subdue the lion; the idea so beautifully shewn forth in Spenser's royal lion becoming the guardian of his

* "The Magazine for the Young," 1868, p. 321.

virgin Una. The fearless eye, upright form, and tone of command, assuredly do master animals, in virtue of the rule given to man; and when these are found in a little innocent ignorant child, totally devoid of strength, and they meet with ready and loving submission, surely we are reminded of the old days of peace in Paradise, and led onward to the prophecy of the sucking child putting his hand on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child upon the cockatrice' den.

Thus the mutual love of babes and animals is "a sweet awful sacrament," by which is here meant a mysterious outward sign of the inward victory. "The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them." Our own little ones' understanding with the creatures is then here treated as a mysterious token of the conquest that has delivered this earth from the bondage of the enemy, and brought the most various natures to be one together, led by the Little Child of Bethlehem.

Thence the poem turns to the children's exceeding love for these dumb companions:—

> "Oh, why are ye so fondly stirr'd?
> For bounding lamb or lonely bird
> Why should ye joy or mourn?"

The answer is that something of the Good Shepherd's love and tenderness has passed to them in their baptism,

and that this is shewn not only in their love of all created life, but especially in that delight in leading and fondling younger infants, that is the great charm of many a child.

Third Sunday after Easter.

THIS day's poem begins with a description which it is not easy to realize[f], and which, no doubt, refers to some individual effect seen perhaps once on some moist sweet languid April day, oppressing the spirits with that strange sadness and inertness of which all have, at times, been conscious in spring, forming as it does a strange contrast to the exulting life and renovation of all nature.

The poet blames himself for this want of harmony with nature and the season—and "for waking the spectral forms of woe and crime;" and in the next verse, that which is termed religious melancholy is spoken of as, in a measure, unreasonable. Perhaps "the proud heart's self-torturing hour," is meant to refer to the notion (then more prevalent in the theology of the educated classes than at present) that there must in all cases (even of baptized Christians) be a conscious agony of repentance and almost despair, like Christian's Slough of Despond, before faith could begin.

[f] We have seen a perfect grey cloud of silver willow-buds on a copse, but these blossoms appear to be violets.

"The travail pangs must have their way,
The aching brow must lower."

Whereas a Christian ought to have grown up in full faith in the glorious Child, who was born in our hearts long ago. The pains of repentance, though gone through on every sin, should be cast aside in the thankful joy of full pardon, or where would be the "joy that no man taketh from you?" The Christian life should be rejoicing in the resurrection gladness, that followed the agony of the Passion.

Then, turning to our Lord's own simile of the Church's suffering at His Passion and joy in his Resurrection, to the anguish and the gladness of childbirth, the poem dwells on the completeness of the Christian mother's bliss. This is one of the verses deepest enshrined in the recesses of many hearts, for its tender love, and the truth of sympathy which enables so many fond hearts to find their utterance in it. And to shew the cause of the real fulness of that joy, rising high and far above the mere instinct of motherhood, the contrast is drawn from Herodotus' old tale of the Thracian women always bewailing together the birth of a child, as being born to misery.

"They mourn'd to trust their treasure on the main,
Sure of the storm, unknowing of their guide:
Welcome to her the peril and the pain,
For well she knows the home where they may safely hide.

"She joys that one is born
Into a world forgiven,
Her Father's household to adorn,
And dwell with her in Heaven.
So have I seen, in Spring's bewitching hour,
When the glad Earth is offering all her best,
Some gentle maid bend o'er a cherish'd flower,
And wish it worthier on a Parent's heart to rest."

Therewith the poem ends somewhat abruptly; and the argument is rather hinted at than traced, i.e. that the travail-pangs have been over, and that new life has begun for all, so that cheerfulness has become an absolute mark of faith and gratitude; while languor and depression (even when physical) belong to the former things that have passed away.

Short and simple, but lovely and complete, is the *Lyra* April song upon the same text, like the old German distich so familiar to the lovers of Fouqué,—

"Man geht aus Nacht in Sonne
Man geht aus Graus in Wonne
Aus Tod in Leben ein."

Here—but we must quote, we cannot change such words:—

"A fragment of a rainbow bright
Through the moist air I see,
All dark and damp on yonder height,
All clear and gay to me.

"An hour ago the storm was here,
The gleam was far behind.
So will our joys and griefs appear
When earth has ceas'd to blind.

"Grief will be joy, if on its edge
Fall soft that holiest ray:
Joy will be grief, if no faint pledge
Be there of heavenly day."

And then, in the two last stanzas, come the illustrations—the desolation of the Church at the Passion of our Lord, and the gladness of Eve when she deemed the promised seed of the woman was already come, and she cried, "I have gotten the Man[g] from the Lord."

Our Lord lay in His grave, and the despairing disciples said, as a thing past, "We trusted that it should have been He who should have redeemed Israel." Eve's heart bounded at the belief that her fall was repaired and that the serpent would be bruised by her child. She little knew that she was to be the first mother to mourn her son's guilt, or that her child would be the first to stain the earth with violence. The disciples were "slow of heart to believe" that the time was come, the deed was done, the victory won; and that their own Master, whose death they mourned, had conquered for ever by that very death.

[g] Such, commentators tell us, is the force of Genesis iv. 1.

So let us cheer our sorrows and sober our joys by bethinking ourselves how they will look when this life is past.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

"My Saviour, can it ever be
That I should gain by losing Thee?"

It is as it were the pleading of the devoted heart, amazed at our Lord's assurance that His departure was for the good of His Church. If the mother will not leave her helpless babe, how can Christ's disciples in their weakness endure His absence? Yet it was His own word; and His Apostles proved that so it was, when they had watched His ascension into heaven, and returned, not daring to mourn for themselves, but rejoicing in His glory, to

"Their home and God's, that favour'd place,
Where still He shines on Abraham's race,"

—namely, the upper room; the first of all Christian Churches, which continue to enjoy His blessing, as the favoured place where He is present with the true children of Abraham by faith.

There, in prayer, they await His promise; like suppliants awaiting in security their monarch's largess, reserved to increase the joy of his coronation day. They wait—not doubting of His rest, nor of His gracious

purpose; only as yet scarce understanding what that gift could mean which is to be so great as to "make their Saviour's going, gain." That waiting time was through life a period on which Mr. Keble loved to dwell in his teaching—the expectation days, when the greatest of all gifts, the completion of the divine work for man, was to come.

Solemn, sweet, and lovely are the ensuing verses, in which the coming and the work of the Comforter is described; and so simple, that no comment can render them easier. We can scarce refrain from quoting them, but their cadence cannot fail to be in the hearts of all our readers; and it would be presumption to try to paraphrase them. They answer the wistful question at the beginning, they shew what the blessed presence of God the Holy Ghost is to the Church; and the last —turning our gaze inward to our own heart—calls from ourselves the witness that even were our Lord in bodily presence among us, as among the Jews of old, we should have no power to believe on Him without the quickening grace of the Holy Spirit.

> "The Spirit must stir the darkling deep,
> The Dove must settle on the Cross,
> Else we should all sin on or sleep
> With Christ in sight, turning our gain to loss."

If the *Lyra Innocentium* had Scriptural mottoes connecting the poems with the services, that for to-day's

would no doubt be from the Epistle, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." The whole of this Cradle Song of the "Guardian Angels" is a "Morning dream" or vision of the presentation of infant souls at their baptism to their heavenly Father, each by its own angel keeper, as the true first-fruits of His created beings.

> "Ne'er with smile so glad and kind
> Welcom'd God's High-Priest of old
> Abraham's seed with Abraham's mind
> Offering gifts from field and fold,
> Lamb or kid, or first-ripe corn,
> Glory of the Paschal morn;—
> When the shades from Salem's wall
> On Siloah deepest fall,"

as was the welcome with which our great High-Priest "embraced each soul in the arms of His mercy," and assigned its place "in the eternal round" of beings doing Him service in heaven and earth.

Was it a mere dream? Nay—

> "From the Fountain to the Shrine
> Bear me on, thou trance divine;
> Faint not, fade not on my view,
> Till I wake and find thee true."

Fifth Sunday after Easter.

METRE and meaning alike are grave, sad, and full of awe, on this last Sunday of the great forty days, the Sunday of Rogation or prayer, marking the close of the time when our risen Lord still remained upon earth. This solemn time is compared to the deep stillness before a summer shower, only broken by the sweet full note of a bird singing in the distance.

Like that bird, in these "still days of prayer," should the entreaty of the Church be heard, "mourning as a dove;" or as the solitary bird that in the east "sitteth alone on the housetop," filling the night with soft plaintive murmurs. "O deliver not the soul of Thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of Thine enemies," may well be her cry, for her plaint must be a penitential one,—

"Teach her to know and love her hour of prayer."

Surely, when we remember the scant observance of "hours of prayer" in 1823, compared with the Church's present custom, we feel as if this entreaty had been in some degree fulfilled. And observe, the rarer faith becomes, the more earnest intercession must needs grow to be among the faithful who utter the voice of the Church on earth, bewailing the errors of herself and her children, like Hosea's "lost returning spouse."

The parallel in the next verse is carried on to the

penitence before Mount Sinai of the Israelites after their idolatry, the subject of the Lessons for the evening. Here we must take the Church to be represented by Israel, their petitions being gathered into one, and expressed by Moses; as those of the Church are presented before the throne by our Lord Himself.

Israel's was a sin against a ratified covenant, it was a relapse; and so are the sins the Church has to mourn, with "an intenser cry" than the pre-baptismal sins of ignorance can be mourned. And whereas special intercessions were needed for Aaron, the priest, as guiltiest of all in the matter of the golden calf, so error or sin among her priesthood is above all bewailed by the Church. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

Appalled by looking back at the long course of sins that stain our Israel, from the first even until now, and at the darker shades of the future, we suddenly seem as it were to cry from out of the congregation beneath the mountain, seeing Moses, or rather our own true Mediator, bearing the pledge of the covenant we have violated—freshly granted to replace that pledge that Moses shattered on the granite rocks, because those who had sworn to it had instantly set it at naught.

We can only cry,—

> "Withdraw Thine hand, nor dash to earth
> The covenant of our second birth.

"'Tis forfeit like the first—we own it all—
Yet for love's sake
Let it not fall;
But at Thy touch let veilèd hearts awake,
That nearest to Thine altar lie,
Yet least of holy things descry."

There is, of course, an allusion to the deadness of heart of a great part of the clergy in the time when these verses came from a sad and anxious soul, burthened with a sense of the negligence and other errors that lay heavy on the Church. Heavily they lie still; great are the sins, and terrible the shortcomings, for which we still need to entreat our Great Intercessor, our Moses out of sight, to plead with His Father. And yet, in some degree, things are better. If evil has grown, the good has grown; and it is living active good—not almost passive—as it was when this mournful awe-struck Rogation prayer came from the comparatively young pilgrim-priest.

Next time we hear his voice, it is no longer under the penitential shadow of Sinai; but he is singing joyously, near the borders of the promised land, to the fresh young generation who have grown up, unscathed by the recollection of Egypt's slavish luxuries, guided always by the Law, guiltless of the faithless murmur, leading the chant over the morning task:—

"Comrades, haste! the tent's tall shading
Lies along the level sand

Far and faint: the stars are fading
O'er the gleaming western strand.
Airs of morning
Freshen the bleak burning land."

This fresh, bright, joyous morning song is to be taken *really* as the song of an Israelite manna-gatherer, not of a Christian disguised under his character, though certain verses are of universal application—as

"Trust Him: care not for the morrow:
Should thine omer overflow,
And some poorer seek to borrow,
Be thy gift nor scant nor slow.
Wouldst thou store it?
Ope thine hand, and let it go."

Or again:—

"For that *one*, that heavenly morrow,
We may care and toil to-day:
Other thrift is loss and sorrow,
Savings are but thrown away.
Hoarded manna!—
Moths and worms shall on it prey."

Most beautiful is the anticipation of the land of promise:—

"Not by manna showers at morning
Shall our board be then supplied,
But a strange pale gold, adorning
Many a tufted mountain's side,
Yearly feed us,
Year by year our murmurings chide.

"There, no prophet's touch awaiting,
From each cool deep cavern start
Rills, that since their first creating
Ne'er have ceas'd to sing their part.
Oft we hear them
In our dreams, with thirsty heart."

There follows the question—Will Canaan, when it is gained, be full and perfect rest? It is answered—

"Nay, fair Canaan
Is not heavenly Mercy's *best.*

"Know ye not, our glorious Leader
Salem may but see, and die?
Israel's guide and nurse and feeder
Israel's hope from far must eye,
Then departing
Find a worthier throne on high."

Observe, it is Salem—Peace—that is selected as what Moses barely beheld. The Israelite argues, as St. Paul did, that the land of promise is not all, but "there remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God."

The song is sung, no doubt, with a thought of Him who like Moses was taken from His people ere they entered fully on His promises; and like them we may sing—

"Deeps of blessing are before us:
Only, while the desert sky
And the sheltering cloud hang o'er us,
Morn by morn, obediently,
Glean we Manna,
And the song of Moses try."

So may we gather up the bread of life, and strive to be of the number of those who stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire, and sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

Once more we feel that to sow in tears is to reap in joy. He who began with mourning, as a turtle-dove, the transgression beneath Mount Sinai, ends by beguiling the wilderness of Paran with the blithesome "Song of the Manna-gatherers."

Ascension Day.

THE Rogation days gained a lovely hymn in the Salisbury Hymnal—No. 119 in "Hymns Ancient and Modern"—a true hymn, simple and deep, on the blessing of the crops.

We have all learnt to look for the soft cloud in the sky almost as we do for our church decorations, as an appropriate part of the holy-day. The two poems in "The Christian Year" and *Lyra* both are alike on heavenly contemplation rising and soaring in the track of the ascending Lord. Most heavenly is the vision of His presence in the first.

> "I mark Him, how by seraph hosts ador'd,
> He to earth's lowest cares is still awake.

"The sun and every vassal star,
All space, beyond the soar of angel wings,
Wait on His word: and yet He stays His car
For every sigh a contrite suppliant brings.

"He listens to the silent tear
For all the anthems of the boundless sky—
And shall our dreams of music bar our ear
To His soul-piercing voice for ever nigh?"

There we are called again to descend to our own tasks of duty upon earth, not "standing to gaze too long," but bending with our Lord

"Where human sorrow breathes her lowly moan."

In due time we shall see His glory return, when we shall see Him as He is, and gazing on Him become transformed into His likeness, from glory to glory.

Again, we have the cloud vanishing in the description of the gazing shepherd-boy, to whom the poem—making him a type of other "pastoral eyes,"—ascribes the wondering thought,—

"What if in such array
Our Saviour through the aërial cleft
Rose on Ascension Day?"

A thought thus following our Lord into heaven must be precious. (Well might he say so whose thoughts were such as were treasured up in the preceding poem.) It passes on to the future, when the Lord shall in like

manner come again; and then happy will those be whose eyes are looking upwards—watching, neither wandering idly in the ends of the earth, nor closed in pride. Happy will those be on whom the light which shall shine at once from east to west shall break either as worshippers in the house of God, or comforters in the house of mourning.

Sunday after Ascension.

"SEED-TIME" is the suggestive title of the beautiful verses that are appropriated to this spring-tide Sunday during the ten days of expectation.

The earth, we are reminded, kindly receives the seeds committed to her bosom, cherishes them, and reproduces them after their kind—"tree, herb, or reed"—and with large increase. How unlike our hearts, where the great Sower hath set celestial flowers, and watered with the water of life, even the Holy Spirit; yet what do we yield in return?

"Largely Thou givest, gracious Lord,
Largely Thy gifts should be restor'd;
Freely Thou givest, and Thy word
Is, 'Freely give.'
He only, who forgets to hoard,
Has learn'd to live.

"Wisely Thou givest—all around
Thine equal rays are resting found,
Yet varying so on various ground
They pierce and strike,
That not two roseate cups are crown'd
With dew alike."

The material fact that in God's glorious Providence the fall of dew or rain is proportioned to the need of every plant, is of course here an allusion to the verse from the Epistle that forms the motto, and which itself seems to be an allusion by St. Peter to St. Paul's explanation to the Romans (chap. xii. 5, 6), and to the Corinthians (1., chap. xii.), of the "diversities" of gifts of the Holy Spirit, as adapting each individual to fulfil his different office as a member of Christ. The gift of any power, faculty, or possession, is a stewardship. Or again it is the seed, so freely and wisely scattered by Him whom we can only resemble by following "the more excellent way,"—more excellent, that is, than any gift in itself—for thus alone can it yield its return, namely, "soft-handed Charity."

Real charity—that is, love to others—not mere alms doled out as tribute for one's own sake; but thoughtful, applying the bounty according to the need, as by a good steward, so as to lend eyes to the blind and feet to the lame; to warm and feed shivering bodies; to reprove the sinful, and comfort the trembling soul, pointing the way upwards, and encouraging prayer, by shewing the in-

finite treasury as little exhausted as when the Saviour had ascended, and was still pausing ere He sent "His gifts to men."

The ten days of expectation are here again dwelt on, as a time of patient confiding marvel who should come to do more than compensate to "souls that mourn for their Master"—"comfortless," as our translation has it—orphans, as it stands in the original Latin. The everlasting doors are represented as standing open to receive prayer and praise, the pure incense offered before the throne, where stands the Healer of all wrongs, the great High-Priest and Intercessor, bearing His golden censer, and offering hearts from every land, united with his own by love; while around Him wait the multitude of blessings that would descend to man with the Holy Spirit.

He maketh some apostles, some prophets, some teachers, some evangelists; each receives the gift in his degree. And so have we received a gift; and what have we to do but to

"Give what He gave,"

and use our power, be it what it may, for His glory, and man's salvation.

"The upper room furnished," the guest-chamber in one of the houses on Mount Sion, was always a special home of the poet's thoughts; and even some of his last wandering words referred to it, so dear was it to him

as the first Christian Church, the place of the first Eucharist, of the first consecration, and above all, of the coming of the Holy Ghost. And, taking the fifty days as the type of our constant waiting for the coming of our Lord, he asks in the *Lyra*,

> "Where are the homes of Paschal Mirth?"

where may be found the joy that no man taketh from us? He answers, that we know of two resorts of the saints, the Temple and the upper room, where the Apostles, with the blessed Virgin and the holy women, were constantly found.

In like manner, our time of watching is spent in His House and at home. In His House, by the communion of saints, we have that same presence of His mother and His apostles; and at our homes, He, too, with the great cloud of witnesses, is watching to hear our prayer:

> "Avaunt, ill thoughts and thoughts of folly!
> Where christen'd infants sport, that floor is holy:
> Holier the station where they bow,
> Adoring Him with daily vow,
> Till He with ampler grace their youthful hearts endow."

For childhood ere Confirmation may be viewed as an Expectation week.

Whitsunday.

THE foundation of this day's poem is the fact that the Jews considered that the day of Pentecost, or Feast of Weeks, commemorated the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, which took place "in the third month" after the Exodus, which, according to the Scripture reckoning, would have begun within fifty days. Thus, according to this computation, it was on the anniversary of the day that the Commandments were spoken from the cloud on Mount Sinai, certainly on that which was observed as such, that the Holy Spirit descended on the Church. On the day the Law was given, He came who alone could enable it to be kept.

The poem then is a comparison of the two occasions. The terrible manifestations on Mount Sinai are set alongside of the gentle mildness of the coming of the Comforter. The language of the contrast is so simple and plain that any paraphrase of it would be useless, and all that we would here remark is, that the line,

"A day of wrath, and not of grace,"

is an improvement on the older editions, which ran,—

"Convinced of sin, but not of grace."

The contrast ends by a lamentation that the sound of the rushing mighty wind, the universal voice and breath

of the Holy Spirit, should be so often quenched in our hearts by the giddy whirl of sin—and by an invocation to Him to come to us, and "save by love or fear."

The later Whitsunday poem, we must own, seems less spontaneous than usual. The two first verses are fine—dwelling on the oneness of the gift, and its manifold demonstrations; and then it is added, that all classes of persons have their representatives, as it were, in those who were then present, all except young children.

> "Nought we read of that sweet age
> Which in His strong embrace he took,
> And seal'd it safe, by word and look."

Yet the venerator of childhood adds that, since the mother of our Lord was present,

> "How in Christ's Anthem fails the children's part,
> While Mary bears Him thron'd in her maternal heart."

It *is*, we fear, a little strained; and the feeling can scarcely be understood by those who can appreciate the poet's yearning for blessings upon the innocents he loved so well, with almost a mother's desire to feel that they share in everything precious. He proceeds, however, to their real claim—that Pentecostal discourse in which

> "Blest Peter shews the key of Heaven,
> And speaks the grace to infants given:
> 'Yours is the Promise, and your babes', and all,
> Whom from all lands afar the Lord our God shall call.'"

Monday in Whitsun-Week

A MOST tender description of the gracefulness of decay, where the hand of ruin has been softly laid, begins the poem, reminding us of some of the lovely spots where lie the remnants of old religious houses.

> "Far opening down some woodland deep
> In their own quiet glade should sleep
> The relics dear to thought,
> And wild-flower wreaths from side to side
> Their waving tracery hang, to hide
> What ruthless Time has wrought."

These thoughts seem to have been called up by the reading of Sir Robert Kerr Porter's travels among the wastes that cover the deserted cities of Asia,—

> "Where slowly, round his isles of sand,
> Euphrates through the lonely land
> Winds toward the pearly main.

The description, so wonderfully harmonizing with the voices of the prophets, must have filled the imagination of the poet, for it has resulted in one of his most remarkable realizations of scenery only known through the eyes and words of others, and animated by a soul that gives the whole a signification. There lies the lost city in utter desolateness, full of loathsome creatures; and on the horizon stalks the majestic lion, actually noted by the traveller; while to the poet he recalls the

lion of Daniel's great vision, the emblem of the Assyrian Empire, when his wings overshadowed the nations, and they adored no power greater in heaven or earth. Those mighty wings are gone; the golden head of the statue—nay, the whole statue itself—of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which perhaps his image at Dura commemorated, has been as utterly overthrown

> "As breezes strew on ocean's sand
> The fabrics of a child."

To understand the ensuing verses, we must remember that Babel is the very emblem of the presumptuous ambition of the world, ever resulting in dispersion and confusion. Whenever man's selfish glory is brought to naught, it is again the Babel overthrow, and still the various cries of discomfiture rise up "hoarse and jarring all."

"Thrice only since" the vision of Daniel in the prime of the Babylonish Empire, have the nations on that haughty height met to scale the heaven like the first Babel builders. The "fierce bear" of Persia, and the "leopard keen" of Macedon, actually did come to the height of their pride at Babylon. There Darius bade no prayer to be offered to God or man save himself; there Alexander received the Greek ambassadors, who awarded him divine honours. There, no further off than at Arbela, the last Darius fled to ignominious death and misery; there, in the very Babylonian palace, Alexander's ring

lay on his empty throne, and his generals plotted, fought, slew, and rushed forth to divide the prey in renewed confusion. And though Rome did not in like manner make Babylon the seat and centre of empire, it was on the very borders of the Mesopotamian province that her power received the first check; and her dominion, like the rest, making an attempt at worldly unity and universal empire, became again dispersion and destruction!

For never shall the crowns of earth be all united on one brow; there never shall be one earthly empire uniting all power. Only "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." Wordly union becomes confusion; heavenly unity can and shall be. In His Church even the confusion of tongues begins to be healed; for with one voice, one prayer, one creed, the same notes of praise unite us, and there shall be one speech.

But ambition need not mourn, though on no edifice of man shall it ever be possible to mount aloft; "He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city;" and "to him that overcometh" shall it be given to sit with Christ in His throne for ever and ever.

The poem in the *Lyra* is on "Hours of Prayer," founded upon the noticeable manner in which these hours are marked by acts of grace from heaven—the descent of the Holy Spirit at the third hour, St. Peter's vision at the sixth, and the angel's message to Cornelius

in the evening. If our God is ever ready to grant, and untired in giving, should we not be equally ready to ask? If we talk of the tedium of observing these fixed hours, we are answered, that to our Lord they were hours of agony, scourging at morn, the piercing of the nails at noon, the pains of death at evening:—and for whom?

All day the blue sky is over us, all night the dew descends; the earth lies open to heaven all day, and we should ever be stretching out our hands for blessing. Let the world smile, we will kneel and keep each Passion hour with praise, as He has commemorated it with gifts of power.

Tuesday in Whitsun-Week.

THIS Whitsun Tuesday poem has the peculiar melody that seems always the characteristic of the author, and belongs to the most universally beloved of his writings —the Morning and Evening Hymns, as well as to the three scarcely as much known as they deserve, Morning, Evening, and Midnight at Sea. It is Bishop Ken's measure, with a little more of modern musicalness.

This Tuesday, coming in an Ember-week, is selected for the sigh of the anxious pastor, and the reply thereto; leading the weary eye to compare present trifles with martyrdom, and then to look to the Chief Shepherd.

> "He is th' eternal mirror bright,
> Where Angels view the FATHER'S light,
> And yet in Him the simplest swain
> May read his homely lesson plain."

Then the self-abnegation of the Saviour's life is drawn out step by step, from His Birth to His Ascension—nay, to the glimpses of His intercession in heaven. This is His pastoral course even unto the end of the world, and the pattern of all who would follow Him afar in His Ministry. It is held up for adoration and imitation by the Church year by year. The "white-robed souls" taking on them the pledge, and being sworn in as leaders in His host, are called on to listen:—

> "And wheresoe'er in earth's wide field,
> Ye lift, for Him, the red-cross shield,
> Be this your song, your joy and pride,—
> 'Our Champion went before and died.'"

How awful, how increasingly awful, the pastor himself felt his charge, must be perceived when glancing at that deeply personal "Fragment," at page 272 of the Miscellaneous Poems—a meditation drawn from him by the thought of quitting his flock at Coln St. Aldwyn, and resigning his charge.

This day itself in the *Lyra*, however, has one of the sweet bright "Lessons of Nature," suited to the lovely season of Whitsuntide. The bird's nest, with the callow young cherished so tenderly by the winged mother, is made to teach the "nestling of the Holy Dove" how life is cherished by the hovering, brooding wings of love and power—always the symbol of the Almighty, always His chosen token of tender protection.

"He shall defend thee under His wings, and thou shalt be safe under His feathers: His faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler." Again, the eagle cherishing his nest, the hen gathering her brood under her wings, each is made a symbol to assure us that

> "When sorrow comes to thy calm nest,
> Early or late, as come it will,
> Think of yon brood, yon downy breast,
> And hide thee deep in JESUS' will."

Let the dove-note of prayer call upon Him; and even as the eagle feedeth his young,

> "Him Cherub-borne in royal state,
> The food of His Elect to be,
> With eager lip do thou await,
> And veilèd brow, and trembling knee."

And thus, as the nestling is cherished, warmed, and fed into flight and song, so beneath those wings, fed by that food, we may "gather might to soar and sing," to mount up with eagles' wings, and sing with saints and angels.

Trinity Sunday.

THE symbolism of ecclesiastical architecture supplies the framework of the appropriate threefold verse of this day. So little was the subject thought of in 1829, that one cannot but wonder whether the comparison were

suggested by study of old authorities, or whether it was the natural impression produced by a Catholic building on a Catholic mind.

The analogy, then, is that the cathedral is a representation of the entire Church—the Lord's House. The sanctuary, with the altar, the priest and the choir enclosed within it, continues the type set forth by the holy place of old, and represents as it were heaven itself, where is the Divine Presence, and the Church invisible; while the outer portion, the nave, is analagous to the visible Church. Thus, on this Sunday of contemplation of the great mystery of the holy Trinity in Unity, we are represented as waiting before the choir door, unable to see within, but listening to the celestial songs that are caught up and echoed all around us; and as the three aisles all forming one nave lead to the one inner shrine, so do the three special works of the blessed Trinity—Creation, Redemption, Sanctification—all lead us to the Holy of Holies and the Mercy-seat.

And like the calm within a cathredral, while the din of traffic sounds in the street without, is the rest and peace of "being hid privily in the tabernacle from the provoking of all men;" "the peace and pleasure of being in favour with God," as Bishop Wilson calls it, while the world rushes its own way without.

Then comes the question, Why will not the world pause to attend to the music of the Church and her

gentle invitations? Alas! the answer must be that selfishness, the moving spirit of the world, is exactly that to which the calls of the Church must needs be most distasteful. Insubordination to parents or to authority[g], cannot brook the practical thought of an all-seeing, ever-present, Almighty Father; envious brethren cannot enter into love of the great elder Brother on the eternal throne. Sullen bitterness of spirit is especially alien to the whisperings of the Comforter, the Holy Dove. And so the poem ends as it began, with an invocation to the holy Trinity. At the opening, it was an entreaty for grace to praise and to contemplate that vast ocean of Infinity, the Nature of the Godhead; at the close, it is a prayer to be guarded and kept close to our

"Creator, Saviour, strengthening Guide."

I have not tried to explain the fifth and sixth verses, because I do not think I understand the effect they refer to: unless it means that the traveller in a wood on a hill-side, though for the most part seeing nothing but arches and tangles of branches and grey mist, sometimes sees, through the vistas and openings in the mist, lovely gleams of sunshine and shade in the open country beyond; so we—going on too often in a blind, confused way from Sunday to Sunday, service to service—now and

[h] American Christianity (?) has absolutely pronounced "Oriental forms of devotion not suited to free and enlightened citizens!"

then have liftings in the cloud, and discern more clearly what it all means, while some spiritual light brightens our soul—and, taking up the cathedral comparison, we find ourselves "pausing before the choir," brought close upón the divine mystery of Trinity Sunday.

The "Lyre of Innocence" could not fail to have the Words of Baptism for this day, as for its own starting point—

> "Once in His Name who made thee,
> Once in His Name who died for thee,
> Once in His Name who lives to aid thee,
> We plunge thee in Love's boundless sea."

And therewith follow the solemn occasions when through life that Name should ever be named, as our shield, our praise, our glory, our hope—at morning, at evening—in resolving, in resisting, in life, in death; until we

> "Learn with Angels to proclaim it."

First Sunday after Trinity.

THE Lessons for Sundays have brought us to what may be called the second great type of the individual Christian life, in the dealings of God with Israel. The first, as we all know, was the forty years in the wilderness. This is not specially dwelt on in the poems on the Sundays of Easter-tide, except in the Song of the Manna-Gatherers! but it has its full turn when, on the eight-

eenth Sunday, "the Church in the Wilderness" dwells upon Ezekiel's grand retrospect of the rebellions of Israel. In that series of types, the Land of Promise stands, of course, for Heaven, and the waters of Jordan for the dark river of death.

But, in fact,

> "Fair Canaan
> Is not heavenly mercy's best;"

and the Land of Promise has another analogy. Our own condition in the kingdom of heaven answers exactly to that of Israel in Canaan; having entered through the waters, led by the true Joshua, and with our enemies so far subdued that we can keep them under, if only we will not parley with them and let them become snares and thorns to us.

So it is that the two first verses are spoken as it were in the character of an Israelite, looking about on the newly-won country, full of the traces of defeat and slaughter. What a vivid presentation they are of the aspect of what travellers have told us is "emphatically a land of ruins,"—huge ruins on every hill top—so massive, that assuredly no freshly grown "household vine or fig-tree" could have veiled them, in the earlier years of their occupation by the Israelites.

Therewith we pass on to the Christian's disappointment in not finding all the peacefulness, happiness, and assurance, he has been led to expect in religion. He

knows he is dwelling under the fulfilment of the promises so long held out to the believers of old. The great work of mercy is complete. As the commemorations in the Offices of the Church have shewn us, each holy Person of the Godhead has done His own office, or rather is doing it; and the threefold crown of mercy is held out to us, through our Lord Himself.

All we have to do is to hold our own. But, alas! just as Israel looked round on ruins, so our outer life is necessarily one of decline and sadness—something falls or fades from us every year, and

> "The Man seems following still the funeral of the Boy."

The spiritual life ought to be all joy; but it is so much entangled with the temporal life, as to be often dimmed and shadowed by these outward grievances, and oppressed by the contemplation of the lost delights of earlier years. Therefore we close with the prayer that our eyes may be opened to a true sense of our privileges, and that we may veritably feel ourselves in the land of salvation, and within the kingdom of heaven, so as ever to reach forward to the things that are before; and, instead of grieving over the sundry and manifold changes of the world, have our hearts surely fixed where true joys are to be found.

> "Nor by the wayside ruins let us mourn,
> Who have th' eternal towers for our appointed bourne."

We change our volume, and find ourselves called to think over the frightful force of those sad words of the rich man of to-day's Gospel, respecting the five brethren, towards whom his soul turned with helpless dread and longing in the place of torment.

"Five loving souls, each one as mine,
And each for evermore to be!
Each deed of each to thrill
For good or ill
Along thine awful line,
Eternity!"

For verily it is so! One careless word—one insolent look, one scornful tone may lead astray and taint a young soul, so that it bars itself from Paradise. We have heard of St. Augustine's sorrow for the companion whom his example had injured. What must such remorse be in the dreadful world, where there is horrible certainty and no place for repentance?

And yet—

"We scatter seeds with careless hand,
And dream we ne'er shall see them more:
But for a thousand years
Their fruit appears,
In weeds that mar the land,
Or healthful store."

It is literal truth. It can be proved by almost any minute biography, or by merely listening to the recollections of our elders. Everyone remembers some word

or action of another, that has either helped to form his habits, or else sunk into his mind and fixed some opinion. Nor can anyone tell *which* seeds will be caught up and assimilated by the wonderful minds of the young.

Our deeds and words seem gone, but there is no end to them. At the judgment-day we shall not only answer for them on our own part, but we shall see their effects on others. We may see hundreds, the worse for some foolish selfish encouragement we have given to some bad habit of finery or self-indulgence. Or we may see our own nearest and dearest lost, through our worldliness or irreverence, or the obstacles we have selfishly raised to their acting conscientiously. Alas! Alas! What can we do? Only while we live among others,

> "Keep thou the one true way
> In work and play,
> Lest in that world their cry
> Of woe thou hear!

Second Sunday after Trinity.

WE must begin with the *Lyra* to-day, that we may ascend the scale, and, like the lessons to mankind, begin with "Thou shalt do no murder," and end with "Love."

Though St. John's reference to Cain does not form part of the Epistle of to-day, it naturally connects itself therewith; and "he that hateth his brother is a murderer," is the passage of the New Testament that re-

sponds to Cain's wrath and fallen countenance. Here, then, we have a paraphrase of the reproof of the Almighty to Cain.

In a sermon, (published, I think, among the "Plain Sermons by the Authors of Tracts for the Times") reference was made to the remarkable force of the expression, "Sin lieth at the door," as though it were a couching monster outside, ready to spring upon the unwary the instant the least occasion should be given. Any envious, malicious sensation of pining at the favour of another, is such a monster, and the first slight annoyance or provocation, will be his moment for mastering the soul, and leading to word and deed of violence.

Chain the evil, then, while there is time. Unlike the miserable Cain, learn to rejoice in the superiority of thy brother, and to be thankful, even though his gain be thy loss. For a time there must be grief and pain; the sensation leaves a mark in its degree; but alms, prayer, and repentance, may wear it out; deeds of love will force the eye to acquire a kindly glance, and the sullen answer become a meek confession. Prayer and acts of love are the only cure for envy and jealousy.

The lovely Song of Love in the "Christian Year" is one of the gems of the whole collection; and we could not but keep it to the last. The sunset verse, with the clouds mantling round the sun for love, and the ocean verse, are equally exquisite in the scenes they call up,

and the ideas they connect with them. Everyone, we imagine, must have some special glowing sunset called up by this verse—one, mayhap, when the west is a sea of pale burnished radiance, into which tiny clouds of ineffable light, like Fouqué's dream of Aslauga's golden hair, seem to float and lose themselves; or it may be an azure vault, dappled with roseate cloudlets, like the half-developed angel-heads that crowd the background of the Madonna di San Sisto, and glowing with cherubic fire, deep but calm, as they become lost in the central radiance about which they throng, as it were for love.

All of us, too, have our own remembrance of some woodland walk, winding along above the beach, letting "the many-twinkling smile" be now and then glimpsed through the foliage, and the gentle gasping ripple, flow, and dash, making still music in the shade, as "of a great moving and heaving thing struggling for life[1]." Perhaps by the light thrown by Sir J. T. Coleridge's memoir, some of the woods around Sidmouth may be taken to have suggested the description.

In cloud and sea, an appearance suggesting love and life is the charm; and love is the only sign of life in a soul. The love of Christ,

> "As man embraced, as God adored,"

must be the spring of the Christian's life.

[1] Words I have heard Mr. Keble use respecting the sea, in conversation.

"But he, whose heart will bound to mark
The full bright burst of summer morn,
Loves too each little dewy spark
By leaf or flow'ret worn:
Cheap forms, and common hues, 'tis true,
Through the bright shower-drop meet his view;
The colouring may be of this earth;
The lustre comes of heavenly birth.

"E'en so, who loves the Lord aright,
No soul of man can worthless find;
All will be precious in his sight,
Since Christ on all hath shin'd:
But chiefly Christian souls; for they,
Though worn and soil'd with sinful clay,
Are yet, to eyes that see them true,
All glistening with baptismal dew."

No wonder, then, that the most innocent are the most universally loving; or if they who hate the sin most, yet love the poor sinner best. Just as nothing can break the tie of blood, and brothers are brothers evermore, so Christians keep their brotherhood in kindness and pity for ever.

Would that we did so! Great is the need; for the Church is beset by

"Wild thoughts within, bad men without."

and all that can be done for our consolation, is to "draw nearer day by day," each to his brethren, all to God; never changing our road for any persecution, nor marvelling in wonder or dismay to find "the martyr's

foe," the wicked world, as hostile to good as she always was:—

> "But fix'd to hold Love's banner fast,
> And by submission win at last."

Third Sunday after Trinity.

THE angels, who, as our blessed Lord tells us in the Gospel for this day, rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, are the subject of the meditation before us.

First, we have the agony of shame and self-reproach that comes over a nature not yet hardened or callous, and makes it unable to brook the gaze of any human eye; driving the conscious offender to take refuge as far as possible from his kind, seeking the loneliest depths of forest or mountain. Children, under a deep sense of shame, will thus seek solitude; and thus, too, has many a conscience-stricken man become a hermit: the inclination for loneliness, under distress of mind, is everywhere to be found. Yet is the solitude ever attained? The guilty conscience everywhere feels a present gaze; and the very leaves seem to tell out the sad secret of the heart; and this is verily the intuitive sense of the watchfulness of the Eye that never slumbers nor sleeps; it may be, too, of the Cherubim, "who are full of eyes within," and of the great cloud of witnesses who encompass us: and moreover, of our own guardian angel,

whose bound we cannot pass, and who grieves to see our heedlessness of the lovely works with which our God has filled every spot in His creation. So profusely has He scattered them, that man's selfish murmur is,

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The mute unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Forsooth, everything is wasted that man does not enjoy, from the rainbow-tinted shell to the gorgeous paradise depths of a tropical forest! But who knows whether purer beings do not delight in their beauty, and make it a fresh subject of adoration for the Maker of heaven and earth? (The idea has been dwelt on and drawn out in Dr. Newman's sermon for St. Michael's Day.) So, if indeed the woods and fields be full of God's messengers, the angels, what grief and shame to think that their joy should be dimmed by the presence of a human creature, one of God's own children, and moreover, in the very crisis of renovation! The moody shame and sullen grief that has brought the sufferer to his present misery, will become either remorse and despair, or repentance and hope.

> "O turn, and be thou turn'd! the selfish tear,
> In bitter thoughts of low-born care begun,
> Let it flow on, but flow refin'd and clear,
> The turbid waters brightening as they run.

The sorrow for shame and punishment—let it become

sorrow for sin. Then comes hope of pardon; then comes comfort; then comes humility and acknowledgment; then comes the welcome of the loving below, the more full rejoicing of the angels above, when the lost sheep is brought home by the Good Shepherd.

The same most touching thought, that of the angels' joy, is the key-note of Languor, that other poem for this day, of which Sir J. T. Coleridge has told us the history, namely, that he suggested that the tender welcome of a convalescent in the family, is a likeness, as it were, of the joyful watch over the reclaimed sinner in his penitence.

Very sweet are the opening verses, describing the happy children, who

> "mark in playful pensiveness
> How fast the evening clouds undress
> O'er gleaming waters far away,
> And by the tir'd Sun gently lay
> Their robes of glory, to be worn
> More gorgeous with returning morn.
> There, and where'er our fancies roam,
> Our trusting hearts are still at home,
> For at our side we feel
> Our father's smile, our mother's glance.
> Say, can this earth a loving trance
> Of deeper bliss reveal?"

The answer is, that there is a deeper bliss; and we are led to the "cottage home," to see if aught is so precious as the "pale form, half slumbering there," the little convalescent! and are told that,—

"Like a bruis'd leaf, at touch of Fear
Its hidden fragrance Love gives out."

And thence we are carried to the thought of the angels, watching the recovery from sin. How, when the prodigal returns,

"They watch th' all-ruling Eye, for leave
Some flower of Paradise to give,
Bid amaranth odours round him float,
Or breathe into his ear one note
Of that high loving strain,
Which rings from all the harps of Heaven,
When from the Shrine the word is given,
'The dead soul lives again.'"

We are inclined to think this the *tenderest* of all Mr. Keble's poems.

However, this well-endowed day also possesses one of the characteristic *Lyra* poems—one of those that are most like Mr. Keble's sermons—each line, each stanza, most simple in structure; yet the force of meaning in the whole so great, that it takes us by surprise, as when we take up what looks light as air, and find it full of weight. The young child at his prayers is described; and the angel who bears prayer aloft, is said to perceive in it "more than we know, and all we need."

"More than we know, and all we need,
Is in young children's prayer and creed."

Their childish intercession that God will guard their home, includes His Church, which *is* their home. The

father, mother, brothers, and sisters, on whom they pray for blessing, extend from the family they know to the great Family to which they belong; to priests as fathers, to elder women as mothers; to brethren and sisters, pure, sinful, or penitent, dying, toiling, or new-born. It is not a fanciful poetical imagination. Prayer has a sacramental force, depending not on the understanding, but on the purity and innocence of the suppliant. Intercession is the great privilege of the Church; and in the divine words of our prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer and the Psalms, we ask for multitudes of benefits to ourselves and others, such as He only could conceive, who put such supplications into our mouths; and yet they are fulfilled. So the babe's home prayer is verily an intercession for the entire Church.

And again: the child's constant repetition of the ten commandments—what is it but the denunciation of God's judgment on offenders? In like manner, the child Samuel, whose very name was an allusion to the efficacy of prayer, uttered his prayers within the Tabernacle, unknowing as yet that it would be "his crying unto God" that should chiefly win back the Ark of God,

> "Forfeit by priest's and people's sin;"

and that he should be the first renovator of sinful Israel, preparing the way for David and Solomon. Thus, too, he repeated the dread warning to Eli:—

"Ye hearts profane, with penance ache;—
A wondrous peal o'er Israel rung,
Heaven's thunder from a child's meek tongue."

The thought is somewhat that of "Advent Buds," but more awful. These little ones, who stand around us saying the Catechism, are denouncing our sins in the words of God, as surely as Samuel did those of the sons of Eli, when he repeated the message of the night. Yet who knows that among them may not be a Samuel, who may revive that which is ready to perish, strengthen the weak, and be the means of saving our candlestick from being removed?

Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

"THE whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," is the theme of this most lovely poem; very lovely to those who delight in looking back at the ancient classical world, though perhaps less interesting to such as heed little but the present.

Yet even those who have no sympathy with the "feelings after truth" of the Greek of old, must feel the harmony of the verses that begin, as though replying to the words of St. Paul upon the suffering of creation for the sake of Adam's sin, and with Adam's hope. So then, declares the verse, here is the declaration of the Apostle himself; that it was no mere poetic fancy that

there is a certain longing and yearning in all nature for their perfection :—

"Which bids us hear, at each sweet pause
From care and want and toil,
When dewy eve her curtain draws
Over the day's turmoil,

"In the low chant of wakeful birds,
In the deep weltering flood,
In whispering leaves, these solemn words—
'God made us all for good.'"

So it was, that

"Creation's wondrous choir"

began with full harmony of praise; and still "all" the "works of the Lord praise Him, and magnify Him for ever;" and nothing mars their sweet music save man, who should have been its leader, but now overpowers

"with 'harsh din'
The music of Thy works and word,
Ill match'd with grief and sin."

Sin and the world overpower the voice of nature all day; but in the silence of evening, any susceptible soul must become alive to the solemnity and purity of the scene; and the "still and deep," though often undefined, impressions that fall on our souls, are the same

"At which high spirits of old would start
E'en from their Pagan sleep."

It would not be easy here to specify the proofs of such yearnings; they are too numerous, and perhaps more

in the spirit than the letter of individual passages; but let us recollect Hesiod's four ages, Homer's wonderful passage on the halting prayers that follow in the track of evil; the Pythagorean theory of the harmony of creation; the grand Promethean legend, that of Eros and Psyche, and the whole tone of Æschylus, and we feel the throbbings of those great bewildered hearts.

Or, again, take these lines of Euripides:—

> "We will not look on her burial sod
> As the cell of sepulchral sleep;
> It shall be as the shrine of a radiant God;
> And the pilgrim shall visit that blest abode,
> To worship, and not to weep."

Even a child cannot read of Socrates' life and death, without reverence for his grasp of the truth, almost out of reach; and Plato's system was only too perfect for a heathen. Nay, Virgil almost divined the restoration at hand; and though Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius, "the seekers after God," failed to comprehend the Light when it was already shining in the world, they were deeply sensible of the longing for perfection. Even the rude north looked beyond the dread "twilight of the gods," to a perfect restitution of all things. These thoughts were "the wreck of Paradise," and long upbore whatever was good or pure; but though the suffering of nature was perceived, neither reason nor hope could have discovered the remedy.

"The hour that saw from opening heaven
Redeeming glory stream,
Beyond the summer hues of even,
Beyond the mid-day beam.

"Thenceforth, to eyes of high desire,
The meanest things below,
As with a seraph's robe of fire
Invested, burn and glow:

"The rod of Heaven has touch'd them all,
The word from Heaven is spoken;
'Rise, shine, and sing, thou captive thrall:
Are not thy fetters broken?'"

Yet all is not mirth and joy in creation. Living things still feel pain, the more acute in proportion to their finer development; decay passes on all in existence; and, as Dante touchingly says, the loveliest forms in nature are as if made by an artificer with a trembling hand. Why is this? Because, though the world is redeemed, "sin lingers still:" the full adoption of the sons of God is not complete; "the redemption of the body," which belongs to the world of Adam, is not yet complete; and until our Lord return, creation still must be subject to vanity, i.e. nothingness and decay, in hope of that hour when He shall make new heavens and a new earth; when old things shall have passed away, and all things shall have become new.

"The creature" sings his chant of promise again in the person of the robin-redbreast, that so often haunts

our churches, that it seems hardly needful to specify one which spent its winters in Winchester Cathedral as a home, and which we believe to have been the subject of this poem, especially as it was often heard singing throughout the anthem, and continuing through the ensuing prayers and the thanksgiving. To the poet, the sweet joyous song, breaking forth from the top of the old crowned chests of the bones of kings a thousand years ago, and chiming in as we bless God for our creation, preservation, and the redemption of the world, seems to say,

> "Not man alone
> Lives in the shade of JESUS' Throne,
> And shares the Saints' employ."

The angels, who were not purchased by the death of Christ, like us, adore it with us, we know; and may not some gleams of light have fallen from our Lord on our sinless companions, who suffer because he who has dominion over them has transgressed?

We know that the sheep at Bethlehem saw the angelic choir; and the ox and ass shared the cave where the holy Babe was born: nay, the patient and often misused animal, whom our Lord selected for His triumphal procession, bears the mark of His own Cross. Surely we who bear that sign should fear to enthrall

> "To woe and wrong His creatures, seal'd
> For blessing, aid to earn and yield,
> As ere our father's fall!"

The spirit is akin to that of the beautiful legends of St. Francis and the birds; or of St. Antony of Padua and the frogs, whose croakings he silenced because they interfered with his devotions, until he felt himself rebuked by coming to the words, "O ye whales, and *all that move in the waters*, bless ye the Lord! praise Him, and magnify Him for ever."

Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

MUCH more simple than those we have had lately to study, is this song of the fishermen of Bethsaida. It is of course primarily the meditation of one of the "fishers of men," the ministers of the Church; but it also touches the hearts of all who are in any way "set to seek the souls" that "Christ hath bought;" and who is not? Who has not felt how far from tranquil is our ocean? who has not watched in anxiety? who has not been disappointed in the best considered schemes, and known the

"Sad dawn of cheerless day,"

when those for whom we have most earnestly sought refuse to be brought in? Yet still there is the same confidence:—

"Our Master is at hand,
To cheer our solitary song,
And guide us to the strand:"

but only in His own time, and when we have toiled in many waters, still patiently, hopefully, dutifully. There are times of success too; and then well is it if we take the warning from the prophet of old, against worshipping our own nets; namely, ascribing the work to our own contrivance; adoring, so to speak, our own influence, our pains, care, or good management, and saying, "My own right hand, and the strength of my might, hath gotten me these."

> "To our own nets ne'er bow we down,
> Lest on the eternal shore
> The angels, while our draught they own,
> Reject us evermore."

Perhaps St. Bernard best met such a temptation when, on feeling some complacency in a sermon of his own, he burst forth aloud, "Satan, I did not make this for thee; neither hast thou any part therein."

In the *Lyra*, the Christian child is addressed as anointed, even as David was, and reminded of His Christian conflict. The lion and the bear represent childish faults conquered by prayer; but the mightier foe, the battle of the life, is approaching. Confirmation bestows a stronger life, and the armour must be put on; not sword, shield, or spear, but "charm words from our Book," and

> "Gems from our baptismal Brook,"

are the weapons. For since Satan attacks us through

all our "five gateways" of the senses, each must be guarded

"With the smooth stones from the Fount;"

namely, the Commandments, the Word of God, that we know to be the best weapon against Satan. Then—

"Keep thy staff, the Cross, in hand:
Thou shalt see the giant foe
By the word of Faith laid low,
O'er him conquering stand."

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

AFTER a feverish, restless, excited night, when sleep has seemed only to confuse and oppress us with a vague burthensome sense of care and sin, how often the whole of our distress is at once dispelled, that of the body by the fresh breath of spring, that of the mind by the thought of the presence of God.

Such are the wonders of God's grace, hourly wrought, according to the words of George Herbert in his poem of "Temper," on the fitfulness of man's spirits:—

"Although there were some forty heavens or more,
Sometimes I peer above them all;
Sometimes I hardly reach a score,
Sometimes to hell I fall.

* * * * * *

"The grosser world stands to Thy word and art,
But Thy diviner world of grace,
Thou suddenly dost raise and raze,
And every day a new Creator art."

So the mood alters from gloom to brightness, from despondency to hope, just as the world does when the sunshine suddenly breaks through a ridge of cloud, and bathes the dull cold world in warm cheerful radiance.

Such a change may come on us in the midst even of sorrow for our sins, for we have the Book where heavenly mercy shines out as free to all as the sunlight itself. For example, just as an April shower seems to make the woods assume at once their veil of tender green, "the lifeless and uncoloured scene flush into variety again;" so the dull cold heart of stone that "Israel's crowned mourner" had so long borne within him, melted into holy repentance at the words of the prophet.

Then Nathan, forestalling the office of the Absolver, since he verily bore the Divine word of pardon, hastened to speak. "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." And gently as the word was spoken, heaven re-echoed it.

"And all the band of angels, us'd to sing
In heaven, accordant to his raptur'd string,
Who many a month had turn'd away
With veilèd eyes, nor own'd his lay,

"Now spread their wings and throng around
To the glad mournful sound,
And welcome, with bright open face,
The broken heart to love's embrace."

For surely, if the angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, their joy must have been exceeding when the sweet Psalmist, who had of all the sons of men best sung with them on earth, returned from his fall to be again "the man after God's own heart."

From the time David's hardness of heart broke like the smitten rock, there has welled forth a flood of holy tears, following along with the Church through her whole course, ever fresh, ever forming the mind to penitence and giving fit vent to the sense of contrition. What thousands and ten thousands of aching hearts have been solaced by the assurance that "a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." What millions of the dying have clung to those earnest prayers to guide their wavering entreaties! Or, again, how many miserable concealments may not have been broken through by the record of David's own experience, "I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord, and so Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

There let us seek refreshment, and after repentance after that sort we shall be "upholden by His free spirit," for the force of which expression we are referred to Bishop Horne's comment on the fifty-first Psalm: "Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy *free* (or princely, or liberal) Spirit. David . . . prayeth . . . to be preserved and continued in that state of salvation by the Spirit of God, which might enable

him to act as became a prophet and a king, free from base desires and enslaving lusts."

And here follows what Dr. Newman in his *Apologia* tells us he could never read without applying it to Scott, though aware that the author, in his humility, had no thought but of himself. In this he was but like St. Paul in his wholesome humble fear and watchfulness, "lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." And O it must needs be the dread of every one, who in any sort has attempted any work for the spiritual teaching of others. Each must from the very heart re-echo the entreaty to such as may have derived any benefit from such teaching.

"Think on the minstrel as ye kneel:

* * * * * *

And let your prayer for charity arise,
That his own heart may hear his melodies,
And a true voice to him may cry,
'Thy GOD forgives—thou shalt not die.'"

"Presumption[k]" is one of the very simple yet very thrilling *Lyra* poems, and on that same subject of David's sin, and the change it made in the life previously so bright and beautiful, that as it has been remarked, he never was the same man again.

[k] "Presumption" was added to the second edition of the *Lyra*, but unfortunately by some accident this and "Danger of Praise" have changed places, this being given to the Fourth Sunday in Advent, and "Danger of Praise" (upon that Sunday's Gospel) to the Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

It is an address to a child, following his generous indignation at the piteous story of the ewe lamb, and his sense of the impossibility of falling into so cruel and heartless a sin. Then comes the warning:—

"But mark, young David was as thou,
A generous boy with open brow.
With heart as pure as mountain air
He caroll'd to his fleecy care:
With motion free as mountain cloud
He trode where mists the moorland shroud,
From bear and lion tore the prey,
Nor deem'd he e'er should rend as they.

"Such was his dawn: but O! how grieve
Good angels o'er his noon and eve!
He that with oil of joy began
In sackcloth ends, a fallen man.
Then wherefore trust youth's eager thought?
Wait till thine arm all day hath wrought:
Wait humbly till thy matin psalm
Due cadence find in evening calm."

We cannot help summing up that chequered life of the man after God's own heart in those grand and forcible ones of Dr. Newman's, in which David's spiritual guardians are supposed, at the time of his anointing, to forebode his career, knowing that—

"We, thine angels, arching round thee,
Ne'er shall find thee as we found thee,
When thy faith first brought us near,
To quell the lion and the bear.

Twofold praise thou shalt attain,
In royal court and battle plain;
Then comes heart-ache, care, distress,
Blighted hope, and loneliness;
Wounds from friend and gifts from foe,
Dizzied faith, and guilt and woe;
Loftiest aims by earth defiled,
Gleams of wisdom sin-beguiled,
Sated power's tyrannic mood,
Counsels shared with men of blood,
Sad success, parental tears,
And a heavy gift of years.
Strange, that guileless face and form
To lavish on the scarring storm!
Yet we take thee in thy blindness,
And we buffet thee in kindness;
Little chary of thy fame,—
Dust unborn may bless or blame,—
But we mould thee for the root
Of man's promised healing fruit,
And we mould thee, hence to rise
As our brother to the skies."

One is dated 1846, the other 1832. One is the elder's poem, one the young man's; and how curious that while the youthful one rehearses the perils and falls, it is buoyantly and exultingly at the final safety; the other, still hopeful indeed, is grave and cautious, still watching, though well-nigh in the cadence of evening calm.

Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

DAVID again furnishes the thought in the *Lyra* for to-day. His "I will not offer burnt-offerings without cost," is made the reply to the grudging spirit that demands, "To what purpose is this waste?" applying it especially to church decoration, as surely it well may be applied, since the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite was verily destined to become the site of the Temple.

The question is put, Why is in old cathedrals and churches such exquisite carving bestowed upon the lofty roof, or behind a screen as well as in front, where no eye of man can admire? Why should gold and gems be lavished on the sacred vessels, so seldom examined and displayed, or why adorn the chancel in as costly a manner as possible?

The first reply comes from the teachers of the *Lyra* children, whose chief delight in conveying a present is in having themselves had a share in making it. Or, again, it is the spirit that must needs make a love-token as perfect and excellent as can be, as an expression of the heart, and would cherish the keepsake in the most precious casket. Then we rise to the favoured king, who would not offer that which cost him nothing; and lastly, we are bidden reverently to recollect the com-

mendation bestowed upon the outpouring of the precious ointment of spikenard from the alabaster-box. In the words of a former poem,—

> "Love delights to bring her best,
> And where Love is, that offering evermore is blest."

The elder poem, on the Gospel, is one of the most difficult in the "Christian Year," and one that perhaps it requires both a certain temperament and some experience to appreciate, for the subject is the contrast between a spiritual feast and the dryness of common life both before and after it. The early part is carried on like a parable, in the description of the scenery in which the half-famished multitude were waiting on their Lord on the bare hills above Bethsaida, with Sirion rising high to the north, and Tabor to the south; and just below Gennesaret's lake lies, closely shut in by the hills, (we confess that we do not understand

> "Though all seem gather'd in one eager bound,")

and on beyond lies the long narrow palm-clad cleft, along which the Jordan rushes down towards the dark sulphureous sea, "where five proud cities lie." Bela or Zoar must be reckoned here, together with Admah, Zeboim, and the two better known ones. The landscape is severe and desolate, but the weary Galilean had not to travel fainting over the inhospitable and parching hills to his distant home, for his Master was

beside him full of mercy, and ready to bring relief. No angel wing was seen, no bread of heaven fell visibly:—

> "But one poor fisher's rude and scanty store
> Is all He asks (and more than needs)
> Who men and angels daily feeds,
> And stills the wailing sea-bird on the hungry shore."

And though the feast was soon over, and the hills left lonely, must not the recollection of what had been there done for them have always been with the guests, cheering them, and changing their whole view of life?

Within this description there is a reference to the state of mind in which a Christian may be who has long striven to do his duty, attended on Church ordinances, and read his Bible, but all in a dry and dreary frame, without feeling comfort or finding himself the better, and more full of the fear of punishment than of the hope of bliss. But let him not turn away. In time, when his constancy and patience have been brought out, will come his hour for healing and for balm.

No outward change, perhaps, may take place in the measure or manner of the ordinances he has been using; all may seem as homely, as stinted, as uninspiring as before, but the full perception of blessing is conveyed, the perfect feast of love and joy is poured in on the heart. Or, again, the feast may come through holy teaching from without, or from the bringing near of greater privileges in Church services, with all those

accessories that aid and lift the soul into a blessed and rapturous sense of communion with God. In some way or other, the patient soul will have the feast. Then again will come a reaction, but it can never again be as it was before that rapture was vouchsafed.

Or we may read it in another way. The "rapture gay" would thus be the common joys of youthful high spirits and prosperity; and when these have been taken quite away, and we have followed our Lord into the desert, He will spread the feast of His love, open our souls to Him, and bless them. The rude and scanty store, when we have felt Him near, is everything satisfying; and the heavenly presence, hope, and longing, en noble and beautify all the things of life.

As a mountain traveller in the night, pausing to listen and hearing no sound in the distance, may through the very solitude become the more conscious of the Divine presence and protection, so the Christian, even when alone, and, it may be, debarred from that which brought the feast of rapture, feels the presence lifting the world nearer heaven, and everything in common life speaks to him of the loving-kindness he has once tasted.

> "Seen daily, yet unmark'd before,
> Earth's common paths are strewn all o'er
> With flowers of pensive hope, the wreath of man forgiven."

How like is this to the spirit of Eugénie de Guérin's sweet moralizings over earth's common paths, the bird's

footmarks in the snow, the bird flying over the tree, or the very washing in the stream.

The fair types of nature are constant food for heavenly musings, and food for interest and enjoyment; the primrose, the summer rose, the autumn leaf; or, again, the stars above, and the poor among us; all become means of uplifting the heart, and doing the work of grace. For either men love us, or they require our love or charity, or else indeed their very misconduct and ill-usage may be the highest lesson of all, and train us in the "thankworthy" of the practice of patience[1].

Thus we need have no fears or despondencies in following Him,—

> "Whose love can turn earth's worst and least
> Into a conqueror's royal feast."

Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

THE disobedient prophet is made the text of a warning something like that in "Presumption," that good beginnings are not all. But there is something more

[1] This meaning, I think, must belong to

> "Men love us, or they need our love;
> Freely they own, or heedless prove
> The curse of lawless hearts, the joy of self-control."

Either they love us, or require good works of us, or at the very worst unintentionally teach us self-control, like the sermon which, according to George Herbert, may at least be an exercise of patience.

vividly personal in it, as though the poet-pastor were cautioning himself, when he speaks of the mission of the man of God, sent to warn the apostate king, who was perverting the altar of Bethel, raised in memory of the angelic vision of Jacob.

Wonders were wrought, and great effects produced. And then was the moment to return, touching none of the rewards, partaking in none of the pleasures that might savour of the sin he had rebuked. And in this warning there is no doubt an under-current of thought upon the danger to those who have produced an impression of becoming entangled by their own popularity, into truckling to the very evils they had denounced, and falling back to idolatry to this world.

> "The grey-hair'd saint may fail at last,
> The surest guide a wanderer prove;
> Death only binds us fast
> To the bright shore of love."

Nothing but death is a sure deliverance from evil.

The evening Lesson is followed in the *Lyra*. The subject is the apparent strangeness of demanding half the last morsel destined for the famishing child on behalf of a stranger. And it is unfolded like the beautiful symbolic story that attaches to St. Martin's cloak, King Alfred's loaf, and many another holy saint of the earlier age.

"For in yon haggard form He begs unseen,
To Whom for life we kneel:
One little cake He asks with lowly mien,
Who blesses every meal."

For "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me." And such free-handed believing charity as that widow's *is* verily and literally the most real safeguard against want. Yet more; not only did the mother and son obtain daily food in return for their bounty and self-denial, but life likewise. And in like manner He who is the resurrection and the life, will requite such love as theirs with eternal life.

Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

ONE Lent, Mr. Keble preached a series of Wednesday evening sermons on the five forty days' fasts in the Scripture; the fast of Noah while the Flood was rising, the fast of Moses before the giving of the Law, and the other after the forfeiture of the first tables, the fast of Elijah, and the fast of Jonah.

That on the fast of Elijah was so perfect an elucidation of the line of thought in this poem, that we have much desired to see it printed; but it was preached at a period when he had so much recourse to notes, especially for week-day sermons, that we much fear that this

beautiful series may not be in an available form. We ourselves have no distinct recollection of it, only it made us view the poem with fresh eyes, and we will do our best to detail the ideas it has since conveyed to us. Be it remembered, however, that the sermon never said what we are saying; we are only unravelling the hymn by its help.

Times of anguish and rebuke, when wickedness prevails in high places, and worldliness and dissipation are more than usually rampant, always impel the higher and purer spirits to draw apart, perhaps for their whole lives, as did the hermit saints of Egypt, and the many who have taken refuge in monasticism from the evils of their time. Even those who have most boldly rebuked vice, and struggled most manfully against the apostasy of their day, are at times prone to be almost angered that there is no great judgment of God sent to touch and terrify these sinners, and to retire in despair, as if all they had done was in vain, since they see no fruit, and God, it seems, will not work with them.

> "It is enough, O Lord! now let me die
> E'en as my fathers did: for what am I
> That I should stand, where they have vainly striven?"

The first answer is, "What doest thou here?" forsaking in despondency the immediate task; and then, in rebuke to the bitter feelings of disappointment, indig-

nation, and perplexity, that have really prompted the desertion, comes the wonderful revelation to Elijah, when in that very state of burning anguish of soul.

The great and strong wind is treated as the token of His power; then follows the earthquake of judgment, the flames of wrath; but "the Lord was not" in any of these. The tremendous judgment is the way in which man would like to compel the sinner to hearken, but it is not the Lord's way. Or when indeed He sends His angels with His terrors, there is after the fire "a still small voice." "Soft, meek, tender ways," are those by which He draws the sinner; ways unseen and unheard not merely by the world in general, but by the toiling Elijahs themselves, who are prone to believe that because they do not trace how God is working with them on men's hearts, He is not working at all.

Then the complainer may well go back to his work, never more to cry out, that "I, I only am left," because he cannot see the seven thousand who have never bowed the knee to Baal.

Thou knowest them not, but their Creator knows. There is no risk of waste even in casting bread on the waters; it will be found after many days. "Shew Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory," saith Moses; and it is well, since there is no temptation greater than that of visible success. So it may be better to believe in the multitudes of brethren who worship

with us, than to see the work of our own hands prosper before our eyes.

How he felt that confidence must be heard in the war-song with which he who felt and spoke as Elijah, went back to fight the battle "*Pro Ecclesia Dei*," with the lax indifferent world :—

"Yet along the Church's sky
Stars are scattered, pure and high,
Yet her wasted gardens bear
Autumn violets sweet and rare,
Relics of a spring-time clear,
Earnests of a bright new year.

"Israel yet hath thousands sealed,
Who to Baal never kneeled ;
Seize the banner, spread its fold,
Spread it with no faltering hold,
Spread its foldings high and fair,
Let all see the Cross is there.

"What if to the trumpet's sound,
Voices few come answering round,
Scarce a votary swell the burst,
When the anthem peals at first?
God hath sown, and He will reap ;
Growth is slow where roots are deep."

To our minds these are the most *glorious* and inspiriting of all the verses of this good and patient soldier of his Lord, this Crusader, who has won back to so many their rightful inheritance of true faith.

At first sight it seems a little flat to turn to the simple

poem on a child's garden (a little stiff in versification too), but the lesson it draws out on the words, "Be thou faithful in that which is least, I will make thee ruler over much," is in one way curiously applicable. Life is, he says, a child's play-garden, lent to train us for heaven, by simple fulfilment of every-day duties in our homely round. And it was in the diligent keeping of his small and homely plot of ground, where many were of course utterly unappreciative, and constantly disappointing, that the life was outwardly spent that influences so many, and that the wisdom flowed from that guided the counsels of the Church for so many years, nay, will always be laid up in her stores. The war-cry came from a true swordsman of the Church militant, but from one who never stepped out of his post, nor murmured that it was far short of what his talents deserved, but did his work to the utmost there, and therefore did much more. While seemingly cultivating to the utmost his "play-garden," he was really labouring to the utmost in the great vineyard.

And one illustration we must give of the "bread cast on the waters" in this homeliest way, and of unseen results. One of his chief anxieties used to be the difficulty of touching the souls of the old men in the union workhouse, rough old ignorant work-hardened labourers, on some of whom, with all his attention, kindness, and varied attempts, he could never feel that he made an

impression. One of these, who belonged to another parish, was moved back to his own after a residence of some months in Hursley Union. The ladies who had known him previously, and had no high opinion of him, were instantly struck by the change in his countenance and manner. They asked him how he liked Hursley. "Like it!" he said, "I seemed to myself they was always saying, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.'"

Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

ALREADY we have seen the two Advent poems dwelling on the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem; there are two more on Palm Sunday, and on this day there are no less than three—reckoning that in the "Child's Christian Year," (which, in fact, was written in consequence of a mistake as to which Sunday was unsupplied). Advent gave us the scene in the aspect of the Judge dividing between the faithful and unfaithful in all ages of the Church; also of the Church's buds of promise in her children. Palm Sunday called on all to raise their Hosannas, and to lavish their choicest robes, not on themselves, but on their Lord's honour; and there is the same exhortation, only more individually applied, in that in the "Child's Christian Year:"—

"Lo! from the Eastern hill the Lord
Descends in lowly state,
Let us go out with one accord,
And where He passes wait.

"Prepare with willing hands and true
Glad hymn and garland gay;
What joy if He should look on you,
To hear His kind voice say—

"'I hear thee, and it is My will
By thee to perfect praise;
I have a place for thee to fill,
Have marked thy times and ways.

"'I in the music of the blest
To thee a part assign,
Only do thou sing out thy best;
I call thee, be thou Mine.'"

From these lines, at once so lofty and so simple, the verses turn to the chief thoughts of the day, the tears of the Saviour, and in the final stanza ask—

"Why weeps He? For His people's sin,
And for thy follies all;
For each bad dream thine heart within,
Those tears the bitterer fall."

That weeping was a thought that could not but affect one like Mr. Keble most deeply; and it is the motive of the very early and very simple poem of the "Christian Year" for this day—in which, after touching on the causes for which others have shed tears in the midst of

an eager crowd, like Xerxes at the Hellespont, at the thought of the speedy death of the multitude, or from the innocent man's fear of approaching suffering and shame—the true cause of the tears is brought home to our heart—

"His is a Saviour's woe."

It was for the people

"Who would not let Him keep
The souls He died to win.
Ye hearts, that love the Lord,
If at this sight ye burn,
See that in thought, in deed, in word,
Ye hate what made Him mourn."

Once again in the *Lyra* we hear how

"The little children waiting by
Wonder'd to see Him weep."

But this "Lesson of Nature" dwells chiefly upon the sorrowful yearning that found vent in those tears, but which was expressed in words some months previously —"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

The brooding wings of the mother bird—ever, from the Song of Moses onwards, the sweet tender image of

Divine protection—and her vigilant care of her young, are here pointed out as "tokens true"—among the lessons of nature—of the care that ever hovers over us.

> "So would thy Lord His pinions spread
> Around thee, night and day,
> So lead thee, where is heavenly Bread,
> So, by the Cross whereon He bled,
> The spoiler scare away."

But oh! *be thou gathered.* Be not the care again wilfully wasted, ungratefully spurned, as it was by wretched Jerusalem!

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

THE two strongly contrasted servants of to-day's Lesson each supplies a thought. The first (in the order of the narrative) is a wonderfully sweet one, being that of the blessing which the apparently lonely and forlorn little captive brought to her master:—

> "Yon little maid
> From Israel's breezy mountains borne,
> No more to rest in Sabbath shade,
> Watching the free and wavy corn."

How much is conveyed in these few touches—the mountain girl pining in the rich flats of Damascus, and the weary round of labour utterly unrelieved by the Sabbath rest. Surely she might have seemed utterly forsaken

and forgotten of God. Yet she was set there for His work.

> "So shall the healing Name be known
> By thee on many a heathen shore,
> And Naaman on his chariot throne
> Wait humbly by Elisha's door."

Therefore none—however poor, solitary, and apparently neglected—need despair. Each has his place and purpose, and the very care of God is shewn in setting him where he is. Only, he must claim "his right, his heavenly right, to do and bear all for His sake." And his dreariness may be as blest as was that of the little maid, or of her likeness well-nigh a thousand years later—St. Nonna, a captive like her, who brought the Georgians to Christianity.

The deceit of Gehazi is not, however, so much the subject in the "Christian Year," as is the rebuke to him, which becomes the text of an exhortation founded on that belief, which seems—as expressed in Mr. Keble's correspondence—to have startled the world more than anything else, i.e. that the Church is in decay. It does certainly seem strange that this conviction should be so amazing, considering that our Lord Himself, St. Paul, St. Peter, St. Jude, and St. John, never bid us to expect anything else; and that the whole analogy of the history of the chosen people of old shews, that though there was a continual power of renovation and reformation, though

holy men never ceased out of the land, and God's grace never forsook them, yet still there was constant degeneracy within and warfare without. There is hope always, success often, yet failure around, and at the same time victory. It is often the individual's highest victory when he is apparently utterly defeated. But no wonder the critical world cannot understand this, or its consistency with exulting faith in the Saviour's victory.

And it is with the sense that the Church is in peril—and oh! if she were in peril forty years ago, how much more deadly is her peril now!—that as Elisha rebuked his selfish servant, so the poet rebukes self-seeking and supineness in the Christian, especially, no doubt, in the pastor, but surely in all who feel that they are of necessity soldiers of the Church.

Is it a time to plant and build? Is it a time curiously to provide for our own welfare and aggrandizement, and to use our talents for our own promotion, not for the Church of God,

> "When round our walls the battle lowers,
> When mines are hid beneath our towers,
> And watching foes are stealing round
> To search and spoil the holy ground?"

Or is it a time for dreamy enjoyment,

> "While souls are wandering far and wide,
> And curses swarm on either side?"

No. The stedfastness of a martyr is the spirit for such times as ours—a spirit of such grave resolution as that in which the great Maccabee fought—without one promise of triumph in the prophecies to cheer him, all in quiet self-devotion in "twilight grey," as befits

"A sinner in a life of care."

And this loss of joy and delight is but "for a little while." Judgment is near at hand, and terrible destruction. Outward prosperity would not make us safer then than steady resignation; and, like Baruch of old, we need scarce "seek great things for ourselves," when the utmost we can look to is, that our "life be given" us "for a prey."

O that such words as these would wake our youth from "seeking great things for themselves" to give their talents to the Church of God.

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

"THE Sigh of our Lord" is the subject of our meditation. First, we are reminded, that if sorrow was mingled with even His acts of beneficence to man, we need not be surprised or disappointed that our attempts at charity often bring us vexation and annoyance. If it were otherwise with ourselves, we should soon be a great deal more self-satisfied than we are, and should be in far greater danger of idolizing our own works.

There is this danger for ourselves; but why should our blessed Lord have evinced pain and grief in His deed of mercy? and again, why did He weep at the grave of Lazarus, when He was instantly about to confer such joy upon the mourners?

One answer comes readily. One sinner might be willing to be saved here and there, but how was it with the many? Again, the outward miracle could be worked on the deaf and dumb, but what of "the deaf heart, the dumb by choice?" At the thought of those who will not come to be healed, and who make His vast love of none effect, verily and indeed the Saviour grieves.

For as we are reminded in an awful verse, no human eye save His ever could bear to gaze down the dread abyss of all the evils of the world, because none other could see the shore beyond of eternal bliss. Thus

> "Us'd to behold the Infinite,"

it was possible for Him, even in His human frame, to endure the dreadful contemplation of all the sin He had taken upon Him.

> "Weak eyes on darkness dare not gaze,
> It dazzles like the noon-day blaze;
> But he who sees God's face may brook
> On the true face of Sin to look."

If even with that compensation the sight was so overwhelming to our blessed Lord, what will it be to wretched sinners—

"When in their last, their hopeless day,
Sin, as it is, shall meet their view,
God turn His face for aye away?"

There is no refuge from the dreadful thought, save in the beautiful closing prayer,—

"As Thou hast touch'd our ears, and taught
Our tongues to speak Thy praises plain,
Quell Thou each thankless godless thought
That would make fast our bonds again.
From worldly strife, from mirth unblest,
Drowning Thy music in the breast,
From foul reproach, from thrilling fears,
Preserve, good Lord, Thy servants' ears.

"From idle words, that restless throng
And haunt our hearts when we would pray,
From Pride's false chime, and jarring wrong,
Seal Thou my lips and guard the way:
For Thou hast sworn, that every ear,
Willing or loth, Thy trump shall hear,
And every tongue unchainèd be
To own no hope, no God but Thee."

The unchained tongue is the thought in that most tender poem that we turn to next. It is full of Mr. Keble's peculiar sympathy for the imperfect power of expression. No doubt he knew what that suffering was, for the characteristic of his whole nature was the force and multitude of thoughts and feelings, pent in, as it were, by reserve, and even by their own fulness. His sister used to relate that his father said of him in his boyhood, that "he was a good dog, but he would not

bark;" his whole theory of poetry was, that it was the relief of a reserved but overburthened mind: and no one could hear the pauses in his preaching without the sense that those simple brief clauses bore with them the weight of a flood of thought. And here he has thrown all that he must have felt, though not from any real difficulty of speech beyond a certain want of fluency that arose from the inadequacy of words to his thoughts, into a poem of compassion for those children whom nervousness or physical defect debars from the power of ready utterance. The infant relieves itself by wailing aloud; these cannot.

And here the scene is from those catechizings, when the children stood at the chancel step and replied to the questions, plain, gentle, and diffidently put; and the kind eye singled out one who knew "it all, none half so well," and longed "in turn his tale to tell,"—but in vain, for want of power of utterance. Or again, he dwells on what all the unmusical must keenly feel—the utter incapacity of joining in the songs of praise around. But here is consolation:—

> "O gaze not so in wistful sadness:
> Ere long a morn of power and gladness
> Shall break the heavy dream; the unchain'd voice
> Shall in free air rejoice:
> Thoughts with their words and tones shall meet,
> The unfaltering tongue harmonious greet
> The heart's eternal choice."

Most consoling thought to those who labour not merely under absolute physical defect of speech, but who live under a continual painful sense of confused entangled thoughts, and utter inability to understand themselves or make others understand them, but feel throughout life imprisoned within themselves. Most comfortable, too, to those who have watched those sad changes that loose the silver cord between brain and tongue, and cut off the link between the true soul and the words upon the lips. Most blessed to remember, that when we give thanks for the rest that has come at last, we may feel that

"Thine Ephphatha is sung."

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

THE key-note of this poem is, that God Himself alone can satisfy the heart of man. Moses on the mountain beholds the heavenly original of the Tabernacle in all the glory of reality, yet still yearns for God Himself. These things are to him but the surroundings, it is the face of God for which he longs. The like craving is a part of man's nature, a remnant of that breath which breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and even as warm air is ever mounting, will never let him rest in aught save the love of his Creator.

Even the selfish and sensual prove that it is so by

their very restlessness and discontent[m]; and the proof is also to be found in the lives of the holy men of the elder Covenant, in their very highest moments of inspiration, when they were always looking on to precious things in the future, "a city that hath foundations," and that would not pass away in the midst of their enjoyment. They had the land of Canaan and the hill of Zion; prophecy was fulfilled to them, and wonders were wrought by them.

> "Yet monarchs walk'd as pilgrims still
> In their own land, earth's pride and grace;
> And seers would mourn on Sion's hill
> Their Lord's averted face."

They knew they were living under an elementary rudimentary state of things, and longed for the fulness of time. As St. Peter says, they were "searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you."

> "Vainly they tried the deeps to sound
> E'en of their own prophetic thought,
> When of Christ crucified and crown'd
> His Spirit in them taught:

[m] The thought from Pascal, though most true, is too essentially prosaic to go well into verse.

"But He their aching gaze repress'd
Which sought behind the veil to see,
For not without us fully bless'd
Or perfect might they be."

These lines amplify the saying from St. Peter quoted above, and the one from St. Paul, given in the note, "that they without us should not be made perfect;" and probably both Apostles founded their words upon those of our Lord, "I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things that ye see;" but this expression rather affirms than denies that the holy men of old had a very full faith in the Messiah—that they "rejoiced to see His day, and saw it and were glad[n]."

Yet even so there was a wide difference between them and ourselves:—

"Saints, while the very image He denied,
Made much of the dim shadow; now He gives
The image."

We have the substance, they had the shadows. Moses only saw for a moment the skirt of His glory; we behold Him "as in a glass darkly" indeed, but still Himself, in the person of our blessed Lord; and the true and

[n] I dwell on this because, partly from this verse, I at one time imagined that the prophets were unable to understand their own prophecies, and uttered them by inspiration without entering into their force, or doing more than longing for something more satisfying than their sacrifices; and this notion was corrected by Mr. Keble, as far as I can remember, in the words used above.

reverent contemplation of Him will verily change us, even here, into a faint likeness and reflex of His brightness. So even the great Mediator of the Old Testament, the man who had none like him, was not so favoured as the "least in the kingdom of heaven;" for if his face shone with Heaven's own light, so may the soul of the faithful Christian. And his moment's vision of the least of the glory, while hidden in the cleft of the rock, is not so precious as our steady life-long contemplation, as we stand safe before the mercy-seat, because sprinkled with the atoning Blood.

But with the sense of our wonderful privileges comes the sense of danger:—

> "So like an angel's is our bliss
> (Oh! thought to comfort and appal)
> It needs must bring, if us'd amiss,
> An angel's hopeless fall."

I have a great love for "The Gleaners," the *Lyra* poem of this harvest Sunday. It is so perfect a picture of the September days of gleaning—the heavy dews of morning; the busy day in the amber fields; the sportive children; the infants asleep in the shade of the glorious sheaves, their ruddy ears overhanging like the crest upon a wave; the fitful sounds of singing softened in the still autumn air; the low sun, casting ruddily golden lights upwards on the boles of the trees, and lengthening the shadows on the fields; the round red harvest moon,

climbing slowly up the east; the glow-worms lighting home the families with their beautiful little sheaflets on their heads, and their laps full of scattered ears. Lovely, thankworthy sight! And here each descriptive word is not merely picturesque, but weighty with meaning.

For the two first verses tell us that the Church is the harvest-field, and that Time and Death are the reapers, who cut off and gather in the rich crop of blessings, from among which we may glean for ourselves, if we will work while it is called to-day. Begin betimes, joyous but stedfast, not roaming after pleasure, nor daunted by imaginary dangers—without loitering, for time is short, and lingerers find scanty measure. Mere toys should be laid aside in the earnest task, but not smiles and gladsome talk, for—

> "With ready mirth all sharper tones abate."

Help the poor, the old, the lame, the infant; share your blessings with them, and you will not have the fewer.

> "Sing softly in your heart all day
> Sweet carols to the Harvest's Lord,
> So shall ye chase those evil powers away
> That walk at noon—rude gaze and wanton word."

Then comes eventide, with the calm autumn sunset, when he who has so gone forth harvesting amid the souls of men shall doubtless "come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him."

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

THE thanklessness of the nine lepers, and the thankfulness of the one, is the theme of the meditation of both volumes;. and well it may be, since the exclamation of our Lord is, like His parable of the neglected master of the feast, an intimation how far the Almighty is from being indifferent to our coldness and ingratitude.

"Ten cleans'd, and only one remain!"

It sounds like wonder even in the Omniscient, who moreover personally knew all the heinousness of sin by its burthen. Yet it was not spoken in surprise, but in love, to shame us of our fickle forgetfulness of the resolutions made in the hour of pain or danger. How ready we are to call on God in the time of distress; but when relieved, how often are our prayers and vows forgotten!

The early MS. of the poem varies a little from the published edition. It thus follows up the stanza ending with,—

"Not showers across an April sky
Drift, when the storm is o'er,

"So fast as from the mourner's heart
Those few false drops unblest depart:
For tears from loveless eyes that start
Never draw blessings down.

Those that on earth have lingered long,
And dived into their own hearts' wrong,
The fearful import of this song
Will self-accusing own.

"But youth in all her vernal hues,
Fresh sprinkled as with Eden's dews,
Will not be bade to darkly muse,
Nor feel herself so sore;
So on Elisha's fateful glass
Young Hazael saw a murderer pass,
Nor would believe the averted face
His own dark features wore."

We can see why these two verses were rejected, the last half of the first being little more than an amplification of "the old know the truth of this," while revision could not but reject such a participle as *bade;* (honesty alone prevented us from altering it in this transcript;) and the last lines, (besides the imperfect rhyme,) grand and poetical as the thought is, contain too obvious an allusion to Allan M'Aulay's second sight for the Scriptural subject. We have had a glimpse of the diamond unhewn, and with some of the roughness, we think that one genuine bit of "terrible crystal" has been struck away in the two lines—

"For tears from loveless eyes that start
Never draw blessings down."

The verse that was substituted for these, instead of speaking of youth's presumption and incredulity of its

own instability, laments over false repentances, when the soul deceives itself by lamenting over some old fault to which there is no present temptation, instead of rooting out the actually besetting and cherished sin.

If the recording angels could shew men in their health all their resolutions in their sickness, or set before a nation all the vows they made under the pressure of famine, war, or pestilence, how they would shudder at themselves; and yet in effect this is really done by the simple words of sad reproach, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" And in like manner thankfulness, shewn forth by the lip and by the life, is as truly blest as was the Samaritan who "returned to give glory to God."

Most sweetly the poet read his own lesson again from the action of one of his little favourites, a child about two years old, who held out a flower to him, and when, being engrossed in talking, he (for once) took it inattentively, and without the acknowledgment she expected, the little lady drew herself up with her own peculiar dignity, turned round in her nurse's arms, and pronounced the omitted "Thank you," to herself. We venture to differ from Sir John Coleridge's criticism here, that in the simile, the bird turning its head to chide the irreverent footfall is inconsistent with the *making haste* to hide. If the "gorgeous Indian bird" be of the pheasant kind, it exactly describes the crea-

ture's first gesture—the slow dignified turning of the head, then a cautious movement, and finally a run under the bushes; and something in the pose of the long stately neck of this queenly little baby did make the comparison retrace her manner most individually.

Let us on to the sermon that she so unconsciously preached—how the angels must wonder at our continual acceptance of all that God's Providence has given us so richly to enjoy, without a thought of the Giver.

The youngest is often made to return thanks at the meal, because, as Hooker says, "At the board, and in private, it very well becometh children's innocency to pray, and their parents to say Amen. Which being a part of their virtuous education, serveth greatly to nourish them in the fear of God, and to put us in continual remembrance of that powerful grace, which openeth the mouths of infants to sound His praise."

Again, all the village children smile and curtsey their thanks for a greeting to but one among them. Thankfulness springs up readily and freely among them; it is the older among us who grow cold and hardened to repeated benefits. Well may we pray in the sweetest verse of to-day,—

> "Save our blessings, Master, save
> From the blight of thankless eye:
> Teach us for all joys to crave
> Benediction pure and high,

Own them given, endure them gone,
Shrink from their hardening touch, yet prize them won.
Prize them as rich odours, meet
For Love to lavish on His sacred Feet;—
Prize them as sparkles bright
Of heavenly dew, from yon o'erflowing well of light."

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

PERHAPS no Sunday is hailed with more pleasure by the real lovers of the "Christian Year" than this, the Sunday of remembering "the lilies of the field" and all their fair sisterhood, the

"Sweet nurslings of the vernal skies,"

the delight of childhood, the soothing alleviations of sorrow, the memorials of our decay.

Have we not all loved flowers all the more for being reminded that they are relics of Eden, perhaps as pure, fragrant, and fair, as when they were the joy of the happy ones who were set to dress the garden?

Everything else is changed. The perfection of the animal world is marred by the sufferings and terror that the weaker undergo, and the intellect of man is, alas! full of perversions, tempests, and miseries; but the floral world is entirely untainted, and may afford us the same innocent enjoyment as to Eve while still unfallen.

Of the other lovely works of God on which the blight of our corruption has not descended, the stars are too far beyond our ken, too sublime in their courses, to afford us intimate delight, whilst flowers can be handled, caressed, inhaled, looked into, with ever-increasing perception of their exquisiteness. They "dwell beside our paths and homes," although sin and sorrow may be in both, and man is hardly ever out of reach of their innocent solace; as the African traveller's sinking heart was cheered by the wondrous structure of the moss, the dizzied brain on the Alpine precipice steadied by the contemplation of the blue gentian, the solitary captive befriended by his prison flower.

The birds fleet away from before us in terror, but the flowers are our own, and can be resorted to again and again. Their

> "silent lessons, undescried
> By all but lowly eyes,"

have been enforced by our great Teacher, who Himself taught us how to prize the wonder of their infinite variety and yet conformity to rule[o]. It was a renewal of the original blessing when they were pronounced "very good," that the holy Redeemer should have paused to praise the beauty of the flower world, and

[o] I do not like to break the continuity of the poem, but I must mark that "order wild" includes that marvellous harmony that repeats the mystic numbers of three, four, and five, in such wondrous combination and suggestive forms.

exalt it above all the poor tissues woven by human hands. What is it to the smiling blossoms that winter's storm must come? They rejoice in the sunshine and fear nothing. Would that those who love them would learn their happy secret, and, like them, smile contentedly in the day's joy, without fretting care for the unknown morrow.

It cannot be regretted that this poem was substituted for a much graver and sadder one which had been at first intended for to-day, the subject of which is Jehoiakim's burning of Jeremiah's prophecy. A few verses we will give, though the whole had evidently not received the last touches.

"As over Libya's burning sand
The hunted ostrich oft is seen,
To speed where some lone thicket stands,
That hides her head, and glory in her screen.

"Such is the shelter and the rest
That worldly wisdom would provide,
When erring souls, by God unblest,
From vexing conscience vainly seek to hide.

"O desperate hope to turn thy face
From God, and dream He cannot see;
As though He powerless were, and base,
A creature of our blind idolatry."

Is not this what modern reasoning is trying to make of Almighty God?

After several more verses, shewing how the warning terrors of judgment are set before man in time, the poem concludes by describing how the prophecy was re-written in mercy as well as in wrath towards Jehoiakim and his court.

"They sit and fan the sinking fire,
Misdeeming in their frantic joy,
That they have seen God's Law expire;
Oh! blind their own sole refuge to destroy.

"For could the threatenings of His Word
Pass off as they had never been,
Still would remain the sure record,
Nor heaven nor earth can e'er have peace with sin.

"But not in heaven nor earth was e'er
One certain hope for sinners found
Save in the page your rude hands tear,
Save in the pierced Side that ye more deeply wound."

This is too argumentative and deep for verse, and no doubt the author so felt it when he rejected the stanzas. The word *record* perhaps rather obscures the drift. The meaning is, that those who dispute or deny God's Word because of the threatenings are really destroying their own hope. For if there were not one word of doom in existence, it would still be equally impossible that wickedness should go unpunished. Eternal justice must be fulfilled. Peace, where sin exists, there cannot be. And the only hope that ever could cheer one fully conscious of sin, is to be found where the threats are found

—in the Book the sceptic's hands would tear, in the pierced Side of Him who is crucified afresh by the unbeliever.

"I bear in my body the mark of the Lord Jesus," writes St. Paul. Whatever the Apostle may have meant, the poet applies this mark to the cross on our brow at our baptism, and which he compares to the royal badge worn by the soldier, to the shepherd's mark upon his lambs, to warn away all that would injure them.

"Ye elder brethren, think on this!
Think on the mighty bliss,
Should He, the Friend of babes, one day,
The words of blessing say:—
'My seal upon My lambs ye knew,
And I will honour you:'—
And think upon the eternal loss
If on their foreheads ye deface the glorious Cross."

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

THERE is a sadness, or more properly an answer to sadness, in all the services of this autumnal day. They begin in grief and end in joy, and thus the voice of the "Christian Year" to-day is full of resignation. It comes from a sufferer bidding his friends not wish his pain to be removed so much as that he may be granted a wise and thankful heart such as can submit to chastisement, and benefit by it.

For what sacrifice can God claim in token of our devotion and sincerity, proportioned to the gift He gave to us—His only Son? And yet we cannot be resigned to yield up what He asks of us, but keep lamenting our loss, grudging Him what He has demanded, and hovering like fretful ghosts over the tomb of our past enjoyments. Or like the fevered sick, we make our griefs worse by our own restlessness, ever trying change and remedy, never quietly submitting.

> "Were it not better to lie still,
> Let Him strike home and bless the rod,
> Never so safe as when our will
> Yields undiscern'd by all but God?"

These last two lines have always seemed to us wonderful in their practical depth. Never so safe are we as when the continual sacrifice of will and inclination, be it in little things or great, is unseen and unsuspected by man, so that there is neither credit nor gratitude, "but He that seeth in secret will reward thee openly."

Again: those things that we specially value, and find it hardest to dispense with, they need but to be thought of with a view to the Cross, and we shall see how the resigning them may all become the means of joining in the great sacrifice. For instance, if praise be what we most prize, was not the Cross shame? or if we love ease, let us recollect the bitter agony that there was suffered.

If we would suffer together with Him—be the pain what it may—it is impossible to make an equal sacrifice. We have no throne, no heaven, to give up for Him; but the only thing left for us to do, so as to have part with Him, is to bear our own burthen patiently, gazing where light surely is, though a cloud may for the time hide it from our sight. Faithful wanderers love to look in the direction of their home, though they know they cannot see it; and so should we, in the time of our trial, look towards Christ, and even though full consolation be withdrawn,

> "Thank" Him "for each trying hour,
> Wishing, not struggling, to be free."

"Bereavement" is one of the best known of all in the *Lyra Innocentium*, partly through Eddis's two beautiful pictures and their photographs. The designs were not taken from the real children who were the original subject of the poem, though oddly enough the elder one turned out very like the real elder sister. They were two little village maidens, the only children of a labourer at a woodland farm, and with nine years' difference in their ages. They were met in the spring and again in the autumn, just as described. We cannot mar the tale by repeating it, it is sufficiently told by the verses themselves. And how precious the voice of comfort at the end is to many a bereaved mourner!

"Thy first glad earthly task is o'er,
And dreary seems thy way.
But what if nearer than before
She watch thee even to-day?

"What if henceforth by Heaven's decree
She leave thee not alone,
But in her turn prove guide to thee
In ways to angels known?

"O yield thee to her whisperings sweet:
Away with thoughts of gloom!
In love the loving spirits greet,
Who wait to bless her tomb.

"In loving hope with her unseen
Walk as in hallow'd air.
When foes are strong and trials keen,
Think, 'What if she be there!'"

A third for this day (Miscellaneous Poems, p. 110,) was written for the "Child's Christian Year," upon a thought of St. Augustine respecting the spiritual significance of our Lord's three recorded miracles of raising the dead. The only one here dwelt on is that of the Gospel, the raising the widow's son at Nain; and the similitude of the corpse carried out for burial, to the soul dead in trespasses and sins, is dwelt on.

"Thy sins, from His own holy place
Are bearing thee away,
But He may touch the bier, His grace
May bid thee rise and pray.

"The Church, thy mother, weeps for thee,
Her tearful prayer perchance
May win the word of pardon, He
May break the deadly trance.

"Only do thou sit up and speak
Soon as thou hear'st His call,
Him honour with confession meek,
He will forgive thee all."

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

THE mysterious warnings of the great Prophet Ezekiel, looking back from the land of his captivity to warn the Holy City, while yet she might have repented and been spared, offer many analogous meditations to the pastors of our own Church in this her day of trial, when if there be much external glory, there is also much of inward corruption. So looking at our noble cathedrals and beauteous colleges, the exclamation may well be—

"Stately thy walls, and holy are the prayers
Which day and night before thine altars rise;
Not statelier, towering o'er her marble stairs,
Flash'd Sion's gilded dome on summer skies,
Not holier, while around him angels bow'd,
From Aaron's censer steam'd the spicy cloud,

"Before the mercy-seat. O, Mother dear,
Wilt thou forgive thy son one boding sigh?
Forgive, if round thy towers he walk in fear,
And tell thy jewels o'er with jealous eye?"

In the days when these words were written, the old foundations and ancient mechanism of our great ecclesiastical system was yet untouched. Who knows how much of spoliation and desecration might have been hindered if our prophet's warning had been heeded by *all* in due time?

He goes on to refer to the terrible vision described in the eighth chapter of Ezekiel, when "the captive prophet" was brought to the Temple as it stood in the days of Zedekiah, still beautiful.

> "God's crownèd mountain, as in happier time,
> Seem'd to rejoice in sunshine all her own."

But, alas! within the court behold the seventy elders of Moses' ancient institution, each with his censer in his hand, offering incense to the paintings on the cloister wall, of the beetle, the crocodile, and other abominable creeping things selected as objects of worship by Egyptian idolatry. Again, see before the north gate the women of Judah wailing after the Syrian fashion for the death of Tammuz, the summer god whose return they would soon hail again with shameless revelry. And again, between the porch and altar, in the very innermost court itself, stood five-and-twenty priests, with their backs to the Holy of Holies containing the mercy-seat, that they might bow like the Persians to the rising sun! No wonder that the vision passed on to the doom of utter destruction on all those whom God's angels had

not marked for salvation because they had not partaken of the sin of their nation.

> "Yet turn thee, son of man—for worse than these
> Thou must behold: thy loathing were but lost
> On dead men's crimes, and Jews' idolatries."

However, it is not an unpractical lamentation over the errors of those in high places, that we are called on to make. It is an examination into our own personal sins. The Temple we are to examine is that of our own hearts, where the Lord God the Holy Ghost hath entered:—

> "Where, looking round, each glance might thee afford
> Some glorious earnest of thine high estate,
> And thou, false heart and frail, hast turn'd from all
> To worship pleasure's shadow on the wall."

Or again: the wailing over the dead Tammuz resembles our fretful mourning over

> "Some darling of blind fancy, dead and gone,"

and the adoring of the rising sun may well be compared to bowing before the "little drop of light" that "dim-eyed men call praise and glory here."

Unless we turn from these, we are verily like those elders of Judah who came to inquire of the Lord with their hearts full of their idols, as in this day's Lesson, putting these fancies and longings of our vain spirits between ourselves and Him.

"Far better we should cross His lightning's path,
Than be according to our idols heard,
And God should take us at our own vain word."

Rising still higher, we are shewn how to pray that we may rise higher, putting away all idols, and seeking to none but God, without wish or care for earthly things, and giving the full spiritual meaning even to those petitions to which our Lord in compassion to our infirmities gave a temporal signification. That so they train us gradually to look higher, and

"love, with Christ, our sole true bliss,
Else, though in Christ's own words, we surely pray amiss."

It is a great transition to pass from this grave and awful admonition to the bright sunny verses on "Sunday nosegays," which recall entirely the village pastor and his help-meet, to whom his little bright-faced country children loved to bring their posies. The verses are an expansion and simplification of a short poem written in 1820.

"The loveliest flowers the closest cling to earth,
And they first feel the sun; so violets blue,
And the soft star-like primrose drench'd in dew,
The happiest of Spring's happy, fragrant birth.
To gentlest touches sweetest tones reply.
Still humbleness with her low-breathed voice
Can steal o'er man's proud heart, and win his choice
From earth to heaven, with mightier witchery
Than eloquence or wisdom e'er could own.
Bloom on then in your shade, contented bloom,
Sweet flowers, nor deem yourselves to all unknown.

Heaven knows you, by whose gales and dews ye thrive.
They know, who one day for their alter'd doom
Shall thank you, taught by you to abase themselves and live."

Here, however, instead of a musing over the flowers, it is an address to the children themselves, reminding them that

"Not to the quick untrembling gaze,
The heart that bounds at human praise,
Loves He to say, Go higher;"

and then he turns to the "little maids that love the spring," and reminds them of their own love and value for the modest violet, shewing them that—

"Oft as with mild caressing hand
Ye cull and bind in tender band
Those bashful flowers so sweet,
With many a Sunday smile,— to rest
Upon some lov'd and honour'd breast,
A welcome gift and meet,—

"Ye to the Heaven-taught soul present
A token and a sacrament,
How to the highest room
Earth's lowliest flowers our Lord receives;
Close to His heart a place He gives,
Where they shall ever bloom."

By sacrament is here meant a "visible sign," or rather an emblem; the value set on the modest violet being a token of the exaltation of the humble and meek.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

In one long awful chapter, the voice of God by the Prophet Ezekiel sums up the whole of His dealings with Israel, and from the standing ground of that chapter the poem begins. Like Israel, our Church is in the wilderness of this mortal life. She is the woman to whom the wings of an eagle were granted that she might flee into the wilderness, there to be sheltered from the malice of the dragon, even as the chosen of old fled into the desert from the persecution of Pharaoh.

But that desert might be no howling waste to us if we would have better used our blessings. Like Israel in the wilderness of Paran, we have made our probation longer and more perilous, by our sins as Church and as nation, as well as by our own.

Yet every mystic aid the Israelites had is with us—not in shadow as with them, but in substance; "the shadowing pillar" only betokened the guidance of the Holy Spirit to the whole host of Israel, while He is in our hearts; the living waters from the rock, the angels' bread, are ours, the eternal hopes are before us, and myriads of Christians,—

"From every region, race, and speech,"

swell our numbers; while before our God is laid in homage all the choicest and best in nature and in art.

"And every voice and every heart
Own Thee their God and King."

But though they own, how few will love! How sadly like are we to those with whom God's patient Spirit strove for those long years in the wilderness!

There follows a supplication to the "Father of long-suffering grace," spoken in analogy with this type. It reverts to the wilful hankering to be "as the heathen."

"Vain thought, that shall not be at all,"

for—

"We cannot hope the heathen's doom
To whom God's Son is given,
Whose eyes have seen beyond the tomb,
Who have the key of heaven."

The penitential entreaty is exceedingly beautiful, ending with the prayer, that—

"So when at last our weary days
Are well-nigh wasted here,
And we can trace Thy wondrous ways
In distance calm and clear,

"When in Thy love and Israel's sin
We read our story true,
We may not, all too late, begin
To wish our hopes were new:

"Long-lov'd, long-tried, long-spar'd as they,
Unlike in this alone,
That, by Thy grace, our hearts shall stay
For evermore Thine own."

How often do we hear the demeanour of children in times of affliction discussed, either with satisfaction in their appearance of sensitiveness, or with a certain disappointment in what seems like indifference or want of comprehension. The present verses, so full of reverence for—

"The mystery of the tears of man,"

most beautifully shew that their source is beyond our ken, and that we may not lightly draw our conclusions and judge the young hearts that are in their Maker's hand. Sometimes, when patience and resolution have bravely contended with pain, and have been attributed merely to the high spirit of gentle blood, faith can discern that the strength is the endurance of the Cross. "I like it because it is like our Lord," as a little boy said when caustic was applied for diphtheria. Or again, when children's tears flow for the sorrows of others, they weep with Him who wept for Lazarus, and over sinful Jerusalem; and thus there is deep truth in the saying that there is a time to weep and a time to abstain from weeping, even as while in the Scripture a prophet at one time would cry, "Oh that my head were a fountain of tears!" and at another—as Ezekiel as on this day—

would be laid under the command; "Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead."

The whole is summed up in the last verse, one that well declares the rightful law of tears, poetizing, as it were, the nursery saying, "There's no such waste as to pity oneself."

> "One law is theirs, and Thine: to stay
> Self-loving moans—allow no way
> To grief that *only grieves.*
> But drops that cherish prayer or speed
> The pure resolve, or duteous deed,—
> He gave them, He receives."

It recalls the practical concluding lines in that exquisite poem on Sorrow in the *Lyra Apostolica*:—

> "And when the self-abhorring thrill
> Is past, as pass it must,
> And tasks of life thy spirit fill,
> Then be the self-renouncing will
> The seal of thy calm trust."

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

A GRAND martyr-hymn, and a village incident—how characteristically they come together from him who loved to link the pure souls of infants made holy with the much-tried spirits of them who came out of great tribulation.

A little girl at Ampfield was left to tend the baby at home; her dress caught fire, and the burns proved fatal; but the suffering did not last to the end of her life, and her last entreaty was to be lifted on her mother's lap, to fall asleep there. Such was the origin of the verses headed "Fire," which find their place among Children's Troubles, and which, no doubt, have been turned to by many a mourner for some little sufferer, whose death may seem less piteous after the reminder that it was "wearing the martyr's robe." The description of the child herself is one of the sweetest, simplest bits of description of the village little ones so much loved:—

"We miss thee in thy place at school,
And on thine homeward way,
Where violets by the reedy pool
Peep out so shyly gay:

"Where thou, a true and gentle guide,
Wouldst lead thy little band,
With all an elder sister's pride,
And rule with eye and hand."

The scene is all there—the quiet lane, with the green banks overhung by trees; and the dark pond, half shadowed by them, half enhancing their brightness; and the party of children of all sizes returning to their remote hamlet, climbing the banks, or trolling their hoops, under the motherly supervision of the young elder, with her ever-ready smile and curtsey.

That final comparison of the painless termination to the death of martyrs of yore, is perhaps a reference to the quietness and absence of terror and suffering, so remarkable in the deaths of Perpetua, Felicitas, and the other martyrs of Carthage.

The atmosphere of martyrdom is truly about the whole day; as well it may be, when our learning from that which was written of old is of those who "stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the flame," and became the example and encouragement of those who, having actually "received the promise," could be borne safely through the flame—not back to the weary world, but to the blessed company who follow the Lamb.

"I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." So spake the first witness unto blood, and so has it been with every true martyr since.

> "Is he alone in that dark hour
> Who owns the Lord of love and power?"

Again, we think of Felicitas' reply, "Christ will suffer with me;" of Blandina's peaceful joy on her chair of torment; of the endless number of tales of—

> "A glorious army—men and boys,
> The matron and the maid"—

who were upheld almost visibly; and who excited the

amaze of the beholders by the calmness and joy with which they underwent all that malignity could devise.

Then—sometimes when the persecutor has erred from ignorance alone, as did Nebuchadnezzar, and when there is no wilful hardness of heart, comes the perception that One is walking with them in the waters, or hindering the flame from kindling upon them, making the rush of flame "as it had been a moist whistling wind." There was a young man who knew not who it was of whom Stephen spake, and stopped his ears against the supposed blasphemy—but who in his old age was to write, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me; . . . notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me."

He knew—and there are those still who know by experience *who* stands by them and strengthens them. We cannot mar the description of the widow, the father, the pastor, by paraphrase. Blessed be God that to so many of us the description will recall saints whom we ourselves have watched awhile, as they leant on the hand of—

"The Saviour walking with His faithful Three."

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

THE poem of this day in the "Christian Year" is difficult and sublime. Sir John T. Coleridge connects it with this sentence, in a letter written from Malvern:

"What a delightful feel it is to sit under the shelter of one of the rocks here, and hear the wind sweeping with that peculiar kind of strong moaning sigh which it practises on the bent-grass. I dare say you have marked it a hundred times, but I was never so much struck with it as this evening." No doubt the description of the "romantic note and clear," is a versified memory of this experience; but there is a tradition among other friends that the actual scenery comes from Plinlimmon, and the Malvern Hills do not fulfil the condition of wildness. We believe unbotanical readers have often been puzzled by the word *bent*—but Mr. Keble was always exact in his use of terms for the plant world. A bent is the straw or blossoming stem of any kind of grass when dry and withered; and "bent-grass" is the genus called *Agrostis*, which grows on heaths and barren places, putting up a profusion of bunches of soft, silky, almost linear, leaves, and a small delicate spike of blossoms, like a fairy oat.

Having said this, I proceed to copy a part of a much simplified paraphrase made for the use of quite young people, by one of Mr. Keble's best and most like-minded friends:—

"I remember once standing on a very high hill, from whence I looked down into deep and beautiful valleys and meadows, and saw a great many more hills that looked very blue. I did not see any living creature, and I heard no sound but that of the wind whistling

through the grass, or the streams that were far below me running fast over the pebbles, or sometimes the tinkling bell of the sheep that were feeding on the sides of the hill where I could not see them. Once a great kite flew past me, and I heard the flapping of its wings and its wild cry. It seemed to me that, in that great stillness and loneliness, I ought to listen more to the voice of God; I mean that I ought to listen more to the words that are written in His Book, and to the feelings which He puts into our minds. He spoke to the Israelites by a voice which they could hear; but He speaks to us quite as plainly, through His written Word, and through our own consciences."

That voice speaks to each individual Christian, in his hours of "being convinced of sin," as it did of old, through Micah, to all Israel:—

> "Child of My love! how have I wearied thee?
> Why wilt thou err from Me?
> Have I not brought thee from the house of slaves,
> Parted the drowning waves,
> And set My saints before thee in the way,
> Lest thou shouldst faint or stray?"

Brought from the dominion of Satan, led through the waves of Baptism, with saints, and far more than saints, before us as our example, how can we complain, even if trouble press upon us? Have we any reason to expect exceptions to be made on our account? Are

not afflictions common to man? Are we to be heirs of glory without grief or pain? The present cross is exactly fitted for our bearing; but if we shrink from it or reject it, by-and-by—as in the emblem in the "Baptistery" —if we will not accept the cross sent us by an angel, the devil will impose a heavier weight. Consolation is easily to be had, if we will but look up, and think of the future—nay, of our present security, that He who gave His own Son to us will withhold nothing from us. Indeed, as the space stretching far and wide to the horizon, the multitudinous details of the earthly landscape, and the vastness of the sky above, are all gathered in, and pictured together in the tiny mirror of the eye for each of us—so the great eternal works of God from before the foundation of the world, all relate to each single person; and, as far as he is concerned, centre upon him and his salvation, as much as if there were no other being in existence.

So should we feel the voice of God pleading with our wilful heart.

"Church Bells." It is a Christmas hymn that seems to have come astray into this autumn Sunday, out of the wealth at Christmas. There is a sweet chime in it, of the bell voices that tell of the holy joys of Christmas, and bear on their echoes in the loving ear. The remarkable fact so often recurring, of wanderers in the desert, or sailors at sea, hearing, as it seemed to

them, the familiar chimes of their native village, here comes in—

> "The dim peal in the torrent seems to dwell,
> It greets us from afar in Ocean's measur'd swell."

Or again, the murmuring breeze, or the burning wood on the hearth,

> "Mimic the chimes;"

or even the "seething waters,"—

> "In prison wont to dance and sing."

And, above all (here we have a touch of "Hursley Cathedral," the lovely vaulted beech-wood),—

> "Most it loves in bowers of June
> At will to come and go,
> Where like a minster roof the arch'd boughs show,
> And court the pensive ear of loiterer far below.
>
> "Be mine at Vesper hour to stray
> Full oft that way,
> And when the dreamy sounds decay,
> As with the sun the gale dies down,
> Then far away, from tower or town,
> A true peal let me hear,
> In manifold melodious cheer,
> Through all the lonely grove
> Wafting a fair good-night from His high love,
> Who strews our world with signs from His own world above."

Thus we need never envy those who dwell near the wilder and grander glories of nature, nor deem that they

alone are favoured by echoes of God's voice. The simplest sounds weave themselves, to the faithful ear, into repetitions of the church peals that welcomed us to our baptism. So the same Word of God, ever changing, ever the same, is with us all our life long, speaking to us in everything—since God is over us ever like His sky—often apparently different to us, always the same.

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.

AGAIN we find the peculiarity we had before observed, that the poetry of Mr. Keble's advanced life is brighter and more joyous than that of his younger days. Who could have thought "The Redbreast" the poem of youth, and "Dressing Up" the poem of age? The difference is, in this case, no doubt, that in the one he looked at his own feelings, in the other he resembled the good schoolmaster, who was wont to uncover his head before the possible future of his scholars,—or, rather, the homage here paid is to their present baptismal purity. Whatever tempests may be lowering around, a young child has its holiness, and has within it the possibility of a saint. And to discern and enjoy such hopes, was the privilege of the temper, that had begun by training itself in the grey calm of this perfectly-pictured October morning; still, dewy, motionless, the leaves sere but not yet fallen,

and the silence only broken by the quiet cheery note of the robin redbreast:—

> "Sweet messenger of 'calm decay,'
> Saluting sorrow as you may,
> As one still bent to find or make the best,
> In thee, and in this quiet mead,
> The lesson of sweet peace I read,
> Rather in all to be resign'd than blest."

How many have learnt this lesson from this very verse; how many there are who read it in such recurring autumn mornings, and hear it, as the redbreast sings his clear low song! Not to look for pleasure or joy, but to take all as it comes, view it as God's will, and praise Him for all—this is verily the lesson of sweet peace.

The meditation passes on to the moments when such cheerful resignation is specially blessed and needed; in the home bereavements, which thus alone can be borne by such as "Heaven is teaching how to mourn;" and again by those who feel that their work for their generation is set for them in the time of decay of their Church and nation. Never was there a more perfect, though unconscious, self-delineation than that of the framer of the three last verses, fully persuaded as he was that we —like the later prophets—live in a time of relaxation of discipline, loss of general holiness, and dimming of glory; and yet—

"His spirit calm'd the storm to meet,
Feeling the rock beneath his feet,
And tracing through the cloud th' eternal Cause."

And as "his thoughts to heaven the steadier" rose, his contentment in his "darkling round" was enlivened, as we see by his delight in allegorizing children's play; or perhaps more correctly, deducing a moral from it—tracing the bias, as it were, of the christened spirit.

The first verses are (except the line

"Grave lip and laughing eye")

less happy and flowing than usual, in describing the delight of children when allowed to disguise themselves—

"In fancy-garments gay;"

but when once the verses have taken their swing, the description is as charming as veritable:—

"In semblance proud of warrior's mail
The stripling shall appear,
The maiden meek in robe and veil
Shall mimic bridal gear.

"All thoughtless they, to thoughtful eyes
Love-tokens high present:—
The Bride descending from the skies,
The mail in Baptism lent.

"Yes: fearless may he lift the brow,
Who bears, unstain'd and bright,
By touch of Angels seal'd e'en now,
His Saviour's Cross of might.

"Radiant may be her glance of mirth,
Who wears her chrisom-vest
Pure as when first at her new birth
It wrapt her tender breast.

"O, if so fair the first dim ray
In JESUS' morn of grace,
How will it glow, His perfect Day,
On our triumphant race!

And here the "semblance proud of warrior mail" cannot but lead to the exhortation to the young soldier, to don that "whole armour of God," which St. Paul thrice records, and twice describes in loving detail—so poetic in its terseness and earnestness, that poetry often lags after it in vain. Bishop Heber's magnificent song of victory is perhaps the noblest of all those founded on it, partly from the grandeur with which he sweeps along, without pausing to dwell on each weapon:—

"Gods of the world! ye warrior host
Of darkness and of air,
In vain is all your impious boast,
In vain each missile lightning tost,
In vain the tempter's snare;
Though fast and far your arrows fly,
Though mortal nerve and bone
Shrink in convulsive agony,
The Christian can your rage defy:
Towers o'er his head Salvation's crest,
Faith like a buckler guards his breast—
Undaunted though alone.

"'Tis past! 'tis o'er! In foul defeat
The demon host are fled;
Before the Saviour's mercy-seat,
His livelong work of faith complete,
Their conqueror bends his head:
'The spoils Thyself hast gained, Lord,
I lay before Thy Throne;
Thou wert my Rock, my Shield, my Sword—
My trust was in Thy Name and Word;
'Twas in Thy strength my heart was strong,
Thy Spirit went with mine along—
How was I then alone?'"

Professor Anstice has treated the subject in prayer, his best verse his last:—

"God's and the Virgin's Son,
Thou hast the victory won:
With us in battle be!
Who shall Thy conquests stay?
Till at Thy feet Thou lay
Death, Thy last enemy."

Mr. Keble's is a calm hopeful exhortation:—

"This is thine armour, bath'd in heaven:
Keep thou by prayer and fast
Thy Saviour's seal, so early given:—
All shall be thine at last."

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity.

I HAVE seen this poem criticised for want of reality in the description of the ideal mountain boy. The literal fact that human intercourse does train the mind

better than mere nature, even in its grandest aspects, has been quoted against it; and it may be granted, that many "a mountain boy" is utterly heedless of the glories around him, and never gazes into the "azure deep on high," or the "darksome mere below," with any contemplative view; nay, that he would more readily greet a stranger with a stone than a word of courtesy.

Yet, surely, the lad—granting him holy training, and a meditative soul—is probable enough for the beauty of the verses, that describe his lonely life in the pure atmosphere; and too often, the effect of going out into the world would be, that—

> "of his narrowing heart each year,
> Heaven less and less will fill,
> Less keenly, through his grosser ear,
> The tones of mercy thrill."

And therefore it is that the lesson of forgiveness is so hard. The heart that had only listened to the voice of God, would perceive the infinite frivolity and nothingness of the offences against ourselves, that we feel and resent so vividly, that we are conscious of nothing else. The only way to rate them aright is, to compare them with our own offences against our Lord and Master. And the only way to understand the meanness and littleness of our unwillingness to forgive, is to think of the cost of our own hopes of pardon.

"When thou hast told those isles of light,
And fancied all beyond,
Whatever owns, in depth or height,
Creation's wondrous bond;

"Then in their solemn pageant learn
Sweet mercy's praise to see:
Their Lord resign'd them all, to earn
The bliss of pardoning thee."

"Seventy times seven" serves as the link between this Sunday and the verses called "Unwearied Love," which begins with an expostulation with that temper that now and then is to be found, which counts the cost overmuch, and shrinks back from making good resolutions from a strange misplaced conscientiousness, which will not raise its standard for fear of wearying and being fickle.

"Rise in His Name; throw wide the door,
Let the good Angels in:"

is the call to such an one. And the argument is, that Love is never tired of reiteration. The mother is not weary of the care of her infant; it is not even a pleasure to her to be quit of its apparent importunities for a short time; and thus, in proportion as our love to God increases, we shall find perseverance in devotion become not tedious but delightful. While, on the other hand, God is the inexhaustible Fountain of that love which the mother shews, He is never to be wearied by our suppli-

cations for pardon and grace from His inexhaustible treasury. He has patience that cannot be worn out by repeated repentances—if they be repentances. The just man falleth seven times a-day, and riseth again—that is, if his heart be just, i.e. in earnest. God is infinitely patient, and may we not well be the same when our brother has erred?

The very opportunity of forgiving is a benefit to us, by enabling us to fulfil the conditions of our own pardon; but those who will not pardon their brother have

"No Saviour and no Friend."

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

THIS is one of the most noted, one of the earliest favourites in the "Christian Year," beginning, as it does, with somewhat of the cadence of Gray's Elegy, to which it has always seemed to me an antidote. The Elegy begins and ends with the grave. "Forest Leaves in Autumn" looks beyond it.

The November evening is as perfectly described as the October morning; and the leaves that a fortnight ago hung faded on their trees, are now floating silently down, one by one, like the lives that drop away from us. They fall to remain forgotten; no spring will revive them, and when sun and shower renew everything to life, their decay will only become more complete.

Yet they are pure and innocent; while man, the very cause of their being "subject to vanity," has hope far beyond, and yet he murmurs.

Nay, he might murmur less unreasonably, if his second life were only such as human imaginations have framed it—the listless shadowy Elysium, the rude Valhalla of warfare and banquet, the Mahometan paradise of "bright maidens and unfading vines"—a mere continuation of this world. For if this earth were everything, it would be very dreary, and its very best things, affection and generosity, shine out in the universal gloom only like spangles on a funeral pall. It needs the gleams from beyond to render it bliss. For instance, how heavy, dull, and slow, are our movements; how inferior to the freedom and swiftness of bird, fish, or meteor; yet, when our chain is broken, we shall

> "soar as fast and free
> As his transfigur'd Lord with lightning form
> And snowy vest,"

rising in His glorious track: but though our redemption be purchased, yet that full freedom and glory cannot be ours, till we have been purified and refined by the furnace of this world's trials; so that our body may be in subjection to the spirit, and brought into obedience to the dictates of the mounting soul. When the stormy heart is thus under the control of the higher and better will, then freedom is near.

A stern grave poem ensues in the *Lyra*, its motto from the dread judgment upon the children of Bethel who mocked Elisha.

> "The Powers of Ill have mysteries of their own,
> Their sacramental signs and prayers,"

it begins. They have tokens, like a deadly parody of those of Christ. We know that this is, even outwardly, the case with the Buddhists, and that it was so with our own northern ancestors; and in the spiritual inward world these tokens prevail. Certain signs of character, certain gestures and habits, denoting habitual carelessness and irreverence, are absolute invitations to temptation; and lead to others which become Satan's initiation to his victims, and his mark on them.

And as men in time of war learn by the smallest indication to distinguish between friend and foe, so the powers of the unseen world can, by slight indications, discern whether we are of those *for* or *against* Christ. Lawless wishes, bold looks, absolutely invite evil spirits; and the proud haughty brow is an indication to Satan to attack—Satan, whose onset a saint could only expect to resist by the most earnest prayer and watchfulness.

So sullen disregard of the friendly pleading glance of the elder friend is one of these evil signs. No doubt the pastor poet was thinking of what often grieved and pained him, the rude, loutish, sulky discourtesy of the

village lad, bent on manifesting independence and contempt for authority. Those used to the freer manners of towns, will smile at this being treated as a matter for serious sorrow and reflection; but in a village of old feudal habits, where the children are trained to respect, the rude and marked omission of the customary salute is a sure token of deterioration, soon leading into the godless coarseness and vice of a rustic youth. Mr. Keble always endeavoured to check such beginnings; he would touch his hat himself, and thus compel a return; or he would kindly inquire after the lad's eyes, as if taking it for granted that want of sight could alone cause the parson to be passed by unheeded. For, as he here shews, he regarded such assertions of equality to be the training of—

"Hearts that by and by against the Church shall rise."

And thence he turns to the thought of those far away from his peaceful village, who manifest the same spirit of contempt of the Church as he was trying to check in his boys. He prays, in the fiery zeal of his heart, that the eyes of those who criticise and irreverently discuss Christ's sacred mysteries, may be opened to see that they are doing Satan's work, when they are—

"Making Thy rites a revel and a show,
Where the rude world may come and go,
To sit at ease, and judge the Saints and Seers of old.

"The stubborn knees with holy trembling smite,
Which bow not at Thine awful Name.
Pour from Thine Altar Thine own glorious Light,
Winning the world-enamour'd sight
To turn and see which way the healing radiance came."

So may our land, though late, unlearn her unwillingness to believe in Sacraments, and submit her reason :—

"And in the Gifts, sweet as from Aaron's urn,
And in the pure white Robe, discern
Signs lingering, faint and few, ere the last Saint depart."

It is a fervent entreaty that we may learn to believe and reverence the presence that *is* among us, and value its tokens. May such reverence be impressed on the young, so that they may not be as those children of Bethel who reviled God's prophet.

What must it not have been to any mother among them, who had bred up her child in the ways of scorn, that met with such a doom? How she may have wandered, in her lonely despair, by the wood-side whence the avenging bears came forth; but, in the meantime, Elisha has gone on to Mount Carmel, to pray for those on whom it was of late his duty to pronounce the doom, that vindicated God's glory in His minister. He is the patron of Bethel now, interceding that the desolate homes may be turned to God by His awful judgment.

And our Elisha? Our Lord. His very Name the same, God our salvation. Is not He in the mount,

praying ever for those even who outrage Him, and sending showers from the dews of His intercession! And those showers are thankfully acknowledged. It is they that make the parched blasts of this world's air endurable by the faithful labourer, forced to toil therein, and save the dews of baptismal grace from being scorched up. Their influence is recognised in the consoling parting picture of the homely village greetings, full of loving respect, the smile and curtsey passing along the little throng

"Like forest bluebells in a row,"

whilst here and there is a kind reminder from an elder child, to one whose obeisance may have been forgot. And the whole inspires the thought that

"in each round
Of duty, here on earth's dull ground,
Angels with us rehearse their own majestic rule."

The meaning of this seems to be, that, as the angels and men are constituted in wonderful order, the first of those mighty circles whose joy and delight is in obeisance, are the beings who cast their crowns before the throne, and fall down in adoration; while our little ones' joyous greetings to their spiritual pastors and masters, may be their first training for their eternal ecstasy of worship.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

"THE heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger shall not intermeddle with his joy." "The Imperfection of Human Sympathy" well expresses the thought in this proverb, and is the title of some of the most pensive metaphysical stanzas in "The Christian Year."

A lonely life is shunned and dreaded, yet we *must* die alone; and after all, we are and must be lonely, for perfect knowledge of one another's feelings is absolutely impossible to us. Each of our souls necessarily lives like a hermit in our own individual sphere, looking forth upon the world with eyes that give their own colouring to the scene, partaking of the joy or of the gloom within. No one can transfer his own emotions, nor do more than guess at those of others.

And it is well for us that God alone should know all that is within us, so that our converse with Him should be with the sense that He only can understand us, or else we should be even more ready to rest upon "cloud-born idols of this lower air." For supposing entire sympathy were granted between human hearts, friendship and love would become so perfectly satisfying, that there would be no reaching higher.

Or again, even our earthly friendships are the happier for this imperfect knowledge of one another; for who

could endure the sight of all the bad thoughts that wander about and assail the heart? The sudden discovery of the evil tendencies and foul passions in one who by self-restraint lived in purity and kindness, would be a shock as if a mother found a serpent laid in her infant's place; and if we saw half the real sinfulness of each other's natures in this uncharitable world of ours, "we might friendless live, and die unwept."

Well, then, it is that we should only be fully known to Him who can love us, though He read us true; and that to one another there should be the softening veil between, shading off "each coarse ungentle hue," just as distance does in the landscape. Another benefit of this imperfect knowledge is, the joyous power of hope by which a constant mind, in absence, or in the midst of wear, toil, and change, ever casts the halo of her own bright affection around the object of her love, glorifies it with her pure light, and supports and hallows it by her intercession.

Such "bliss of child-like innocence" there is in some, whose love and freshness last through life by force of purity, and retain the power of living in new worlds of their own, full of happy holy fancies, and dreams that are bright because they are the produce of pure hearts and unstained memories.

But less innocent spirits,—

"Whose wakeful musings are of guilt and fear,"

cannot live in this happy ideal world. Their thoughts must be of repentance; but though they must say farewell to "the ideal scenes so fair," hope is not at an end for them,

> "since Thou hast deign'd,
> Creator of all hearts! to own and share
> The woe of what Thou mad'st, and we have stain'd."

The last two verses—an address to the "Friend who sticketh closer than a brother," to Him who alone can perfectly feel as man for what He perfectly knows as God—seem to us surpassingly beautiful.

The Gospel tells of the healing touch of faith, merely on—

> "The border of His sacred vest;"

and thereon is founded a meditation upon the type presented by the child, no longer carried in his mother's arms, but satisfied to cling to her dress, even while she seems not to heed him—so well is he assured of her love and care. In the little one is seen the likeness of ourselves—set down, as we are, on this earth to try "how we can walk alone." Nay, "not alone," is added. The Lord is close to us, our place is safe within His heart; we cling to Him by the touch of faith in Sacraments and ordinances, in which we grasp the hem of His garment, and whence we derive the healing virtue that upholds us in our walk—not alone, for His presence is with us.

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

THE uncertainty of the number of Trinity Sundays required at this season has made us have only one poem specially fitted to the day—following up that beautiful proverb in the Lesson, "The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found going in the way," and drawing the like signification from the country saying :—

"A rainbow at night
Is the shepherd's delight;
A rainbow in the morning
Is the shepherd's warning."

The same thought is in some measure found in those exquisite verses, in which Southey apologizes for the mirthfulness of his ballad of "The Young Dragon [p] :"—

"Nay, Mistress mine, I made reply,
The autumn hath its flowers,
Nor ever is the sky more gay
Than in the evening hours.

"Our good old cat, Earl Tom-le-magne,
Upon a warm spring day,
Even like a kitten at its sport
Is sometimes seen to play.

[p] His error in that poem was not the gaiety which he so beautifully defends, but the scoffing tone in which he was wont to treat legends, which, though not historically true, dealt with sacred subjects, and were often allegorically real.

"The sense that held me back in youth
From all intemperate gladness,
That same good instinct bids me shun
Unprofitable sadness.

"Nor marvel you if I prefer
Of playful themes to sing;
The October grove hath brighter tints
Than autumn or than spring.

"For o'er the leaves before they fall,
Such hues hath Nature thrown,
That the woods wear in sunless days
A sunshine of their own."

There is some of Southey's self-consciousness and self-complacency here, but the idea is beautifully expressed, and is a worthy parallel to *half* the thought of Mr. Keble's poem. For this begins with the chastening warning against what Southey merely hints at as "intemperate gladness." The morning splendour—so brightly described that we almost see the sparkling of the drops on the glistening, quivering branches, and the glowing blue and gold of the eastern sky, where the sun has just broken out his way—in contrast with the purple cloud, on whose dark depths towers the gorgeous arch,

"Pride of the dewy morning,"

that glittering, laughing beauty is but a token "of a noon of storm and shower;" for the western rainbow is but the glory on the approaching cloud, advancing from the stormy quarter.

So there are other shepherds, who watch the lambs of their flock. They fear to trust that morning radiance :—

"'Tis not the eye of keenest blaze,
Nor the quick-swelling breast,
That soonest thrills at touch of praise—
These do not please him best."

The vehement passionate nature—responsive indeed and brilliant, but easily daunted, dependent on human praise for stimulus, and therefore more noticeable and more attractive—this nature is like the morning rainbow. It bodes storm and shower. It will surely need much chastening. Well if it meet that chastening aright, so that as it was with David after his repentance—

"the matin psalm
Due cadence find in evening calm."

There is more tranquil hope for the "timid glances shy,"

"Still pressing, longing to be right,
Yet fearing to be wrong."

For their wishes and fears do not depend on man's praise or blame, but on the essential right or wrong; and this conscientiousness is often accompanied by a diffidence and shrinking tenderness of feeling—a reverence and shyness, that prevents all display in youth; so that the weather-wise old Scottish proverb is often realized :—

"Evening grey, morning red,
Sends the shepherd wet to bed;
Evening red, morning grey,
Is the sign of a fine day."

Such a morning grey—not dull, but from the slow evaporation of the beneficent dew, in such a mist as watered the Garden of Eden ere yet showers were, laden with all the "blessings of the heaven above, and blessings of the deep that lieth under,"—is verily full of goodly though silent promise, that "at evening-time there shall be light."

"These in Life's distant even
Shall shine serenely bright,
As in th' autumnal heaven
Mild rainbow tints at night,
When the last shower is stealing down,
And ere they sink to rest,
The sun-beams weave a parting crown
For some sweet woodland nest.

"The promise of the morrow
Is glorious on that eve,
Dear as the holy sorrow
When good men cease to live.
When brightening ere it die away
Mounts up their altar flame,
Still tending with intenser ray
To Heaven whence first it came.

"Say not it dies, that glory,
'Tis caught unquench'd on high,
Those saintlike brows so hoary
Shall wear it in the sky.
No smile is like the smile of death,
When all good musings past
Rise wafted with the parting breath,
The sweetest thought the last."

No analysing is needed by these lovely verses, yet it may add a touching association to them to bring to mind that they were the solace of one "whose sun is gone down while it was yet day," yet to whom his sudden evening came as rest from his labours. On that dreary islet in the African river, where Bishop Mackenzie waited in vain for succour, on the last Sunday of his life, he read aloud this poem to his companion in suffering—and soon after in death—just ere "his altar-flame" of love was received back into heaven, whence first it came.

Sunday next before Advent.

How often does this hymn strike to our hearts with its sad and humbling retrospect; and alas! how often have we felt how little our advance since the last time it formed and expressed our sense of failure.

"Gather up the fragments,"—the remnants of the Gospel feast—is the summons; and the question follows, Will fragments and dregs be accepted from those who might have given a whole life-time? When the heedless, indolent mariner finds himself on the verge of the whirlpool, is it of any benefit for him to cross in prayer the hands which might have kept him out of danger? But if there be indeed time, let us cease to waste it in

"Sighs that exhaust but not relieve,"

as we look back on our past year, and the festival of love that has been lavished on hearts all too thankless.

Christmas, Passion-tide, Easter, Whitsuntide, all have come in their turn to uplift us; and among these, according to our needs, the—

> "rites
> By which our Mother's voice invites
> Our GOD to bless our home delights,
> And sweeten every secret tear."

And chief of all, "the dear feast of Jesus dying:" all these have passed by us in turn, without leaving us *all* the holiness that might have come but for our cold hearts. And yet, it is not that we are disheartened by having no example nearer and more after our own imperfect powers than that of our Lord Himself afforded to us; for—

> "Earth's gems the fire of Heaven have caught;
> Martyrs and saints—each glorious day
> Dawning in order on our way—
> Remind us, how our darksome clay
> May keep th' ethereal warmth our new Creator brought."

Nothing—neither feast-day, rite, fast, nor example—has done all for us that it might have done; all have been more or less wasted, and our year is gone. What if it were our life that were as nearly run out as is the year?

> "Our weeks all number'd to the last,
> With time and hope behind us cast,
> And all our work to do with palsied hands and cold."

Who knows that it is not even thus? Who knows that death is not as near as is Advent? Well may we be called on to watch and pray at once, well knowing that if there be love, it can never be vain; and that the knock, if of love, not of fear alone, can never come too late, since love can glean the scattered fragments, refine the dregs, and purify us for the regions where one thought serene is sweeter than our years of striving imperfect sacrifice below.

Yet that sacrifice below is a blessed and precious thing; and how beloved the thought of it was by the faithful priest may be seen in this day's poem in the *Lyra*, one of those few which (to our mind) transcend anything in the "Christian Year." What can be more exquisite than the opening, in which are poetized the curious facts that science has discovered respecting power and motion. So much is summed up in a few tender lines, that it is hard to reduce them to a cold technical explanation. It may be enough to recall how the form of the earth is just not perfectly spherical, the axis not perpendicular to the plane of the orbit, the length of the year not perfectly divisible by days or even hours, far less by the revolutions of the moon; and how all these (and other) apparent inequalities combine to produce that tender graduation of heat and cold, day and night, seasons and years, which makes every change insensible at the moment; each period over-

lapping one another, so that the whole course is not in sharply-defined divisions, or sudden leaps,

"But smooth as sea-bird's wing,
Gliding unwearied, now in Air
And now in Ocean,
As though Life's only call and care
Were graceful motion."

There is something in this beautiful image of the sweep, dip, and float upwards of the sea-bird, that reminds one of the line of the ecliptic on a globe; and the rhythm of the lines has something of the same perfect grace of sound, while they point out how—

"Moon to moon gives silent place,
And bright stars waning
Gradual retire, while morn's still pace
On night is gaining.

Thus or for increase or decay
The seasons wind their viewless way,
Nor but by word of man
Or measure rude by man impos'd,
Is known when day or year hath clos'd,
Summer or Winter's span.
And ever onward as we go,
The wide earth rounding,
The horizon moves in gentle flow,
Not in harsh bounding."

The cause, of course, is traced to the unseen Providence, guiding His creatures by His law, so that their course

may be equable, and "the Church may joyfully serve Him in all godly quietness."

Such, the next verse tells us, are the meditations of—

> "the instructed soul,
> Watching young fingers idly roll
> The mimic earth, or trace
> The picture bright of blue and gold
> The orbs that round the sky's deep fold
> Each other circling chase."

In the corners of the dining-room at Hursley stood a tall old-fashioned pair of globes, with broad horizons and meridian lines, and the celestial one with the stars so well defined that those of the first magnitude were as big as peas. It would seem that these globes, moved so often by the delighted baby fingers of little visitors, inspired the deep and earnest thought of this poem, the complement less of the "Christian Year" for this day than of that for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity, where he speaks of the mystic unison of creation, marred only by man. There, however, the discord comes from sin—here it is from the imperfection of our praise. "One day telleth another, and one night certifieth another;" "All Thy works praise Thee, O God;" and neither the infinite multitude of orbs above, nor flowers below, fail in their appointed tribute of obedience and praise.

"Only man's frail sin-wearied heart
Bears, half in sadness,
A wavering, intermitted part
In that high gladness.—

"Yes: so it was ere JESUS came;"

for then one single spot, only the Temple of Jerusalem,—

"Reflected to the Seraph's ken
Heaven's light and order."

And, save when the morning and evening sacrifices were being offered, the earth was absolutely without voice towards God. But now that the Church is Catholic, we can point to the globe and declare that there is *no* desert here, there is no moment at which, in some portion of the earth, the voice of praise and the breath of sacrifice is not going up from the Church.

While we are asleep, or busy in our daily toils, yet still—

"Somewhere in that hour
The holy words are utter'd, Earth
Is partner made in Angels' mirth,
The unspeakable, pure shower
Of blessings to the unbloody rite
Even now is winging
Its awful way, The Infinite
To meek hearts bringing."

It is literally true. Morning is dawning on some part of the world at every hour of the twenty-four, and with morning comes the morning sacrifice. Our own branch

of the Church (though in her the daily sacrifice is being more and more restored) may not fulfil this complete cycle, but east and west do their part; and wherever there is a priest, however scattered in heathen lands, there is sure to be prayer, and, in one branch at least, the Eucharist. So as some child of pride (Charles V., we believe) boasted that the sun never set on his dominions, so there is no time when, according to Malachi's prophecy, the "incense" of prayer, and the "pure offering" of the holy Body and Blood, are not being presented; so that from earth, His footstool, continually mounts the sweet savour of—

> "that which once for all
> He gave upon the Cross, and we
> Give daily, earth's release to be
> From daily woe and thrall."

So the bride is granted continually to join in the song of praise in heaven, whose echoes St. John transmitted to her, to be sung in her Eucharistic worship.

> "Then mourn we not with drooping heart,
> Though half the globe may seem to part
> Our prayers from home and friends.
> Our matins meet their even song."

New Zealand friends have loved to tell us how their Sunday closes as ours begins. In early times, when there was but one Bishop there, and St. John's College his centre of operations, he and the resident clergy

who had been scattered among different congregations through the Sunday, were wont to meet at 9 P.M. for a short service in the chapel, which they called "the Unity Service," from their always then saying the Collect for Unity (in the Form for the Accession), and likewise because they knew it was the hour in which the Sunday work and Sunday joy were being taken up by their brethren at home. So literally did our matins meet their evensong!

"Gather up the fragments" is again the motto here; but instead of the fragments of a wasted life that are to be gathered, it is the fragments of our imperfect intermitting devotion that are gathered from thousands of altars, millions of worshippers, and all blended into one "Communion of Saints," one universal eucharistic response around the mercy-seat of ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, and of every creature in heaven and in earth. So we pass on to our fresh year, remembering that to God all years are one, and that He will gather into one our interrupted fragments of worship, if it be but loving and sincere; and bless them with perfect union, with the "blessing, glory, and honour, and praise," ascribed by saints and angels, and by the holy Church throughout all the world.

St. Andrew's Day.

FROM the Sundays of the "Christian Year" we turn to the Holy-days.

And first, of course, that saint who is so remarkable as the example of one whose mission seems to be to lead others forward to the work, and then himself draw, as it were, into the background. He was especially beloved by the author of the "Christian Year," from the sympathy springing from the being one of a pair of tenderly-attached brothers; and the present, one of the early class of spontaneous poems, was originally addressed to that brother. He asks what is the most precious memorial that brothers can give one another to serve (in good old homely phrase) as a keepsake.

> "'Tis true, bright hours together told,
> And blissful dreams in secret shar'd,
> Serene or solemn, gay or bold,
> Shall last in fancy unimpair'd."

The original draft of the verse suited the playful mirth of the two brothers' intercourse, but it was changed for publication, as liable to be misunderstood.

The next verse—

> "E'en round the death-bed of the good
> Such dear remembrances will hover,
> And haunt us with no vexing mood
> When all the cares of earth are over,"—

always reminds me of the anecdote of King Charles, on his way to execution pausing to say, "That tree was planted by my brother Henry." Still there is a sense of needing something more durable than even joyous associations; and the question, where it is to be found, is answered by pointing to St. Andrew, learning to know the Lord Christ Himself, and then bringing his brother. Or if the brother be foremost in the race, then—

> "Urge him with thine advancing tread,
> Till, like twin stars, with even pace,
> Each lucid course be duly sped.
>
> "No fading frail memorial give
> To soothe his soul when thou art gone,
> But wreaths of hope for aye to live,
> And thoughts of good together done."

Of course, this does not mean literally to condemn the leaving the earthly memorial, but rather to make the recollection rest on the association of blessed deeds that will bear fruit in everlasting life; so that the home affection may be continued in the heavenly home, and there may be lineaments already attained on earth by which one may be known to the other in heaven.

Deeper, grander, more solemn, is the second poem of this saint's day, inspired by a meditation on the crucifixion of the two brethren, the foremost of the apostolic band, and the only two who actually tasted of the death of the cross. Yet it was not absolutely in the same

mode as their Lord laid down His life that they received the honour of the cross.

> "He who denied—he dares not scale
> With forward step thy holy stair.
> Best for his giddy heart and frail
> In humblest penance to hang downward there."

Whilst for St. Andrew (again distinguished as he who delighted to lead others to Christ)—

> "He sought the way with duteous art
> To change his Cross, yet suffer with his Lord."

The idea is most remarkably full of the characteristics of Mr. Keble's whole teaching, the insight into the fervour of love and sacrifice, and yet the intense reverence shrinking from exact imitation as presumptuous.

Then comes the application. When we see St. Andrew's holy cross, blazoned in our banner as the ensign of our sister nation, or again, in the cypher of the holiest name, (the Greek X, standing for *Ch*,) it should bring before us the memory of St. Andrew bound, to die a lingering death, on the like cross, yet still preaching the word of Him who stretched out His hands all the day. And it should likewise warn us to be ready and willing to submit to whatever He shall send,—

> "Yet stay the rash self-pleasing heart,
> Too forward with His Cross our penal woe to blend."

For we must first bow to own the just punishment of our sin, ere we can without presumption call our sufferings the sharing of the Saviour's Cross.

St. Thomas' Day.

WHILE Christmas is close upon us, and the first notes of festal preparations are striking, the feast of St. Thomas brings associations of Easter and the resurrection; and this poem of the "Christian Year" is indeed so rife with them, that it is one that comes constantly into our minds during the paschal feast itself.

Somewhat as was afterwards done in the Easter Sunday of the *Lyra Innocentium*, the thought here carried out is the manner in which the great tidings are accepted by different classes of mind, taking the types of us who must believe without sight, from among those to whom the sight was vouchsafed. "We," indeed, "were not by when Jesus came," but the certain proofs of His Advent and His victory are around us; and it is with us, in some measure, as it was in those wonderful days when the disciples had as yet not all seen their risen Lord, and "believed not for joy, and wondered."

Love is, in the person of Mary Magdalen, the first to seek the Lord—the first at his grave; and though there disappointed, and dim in faith, uncertain in knowledge, she only knows that He is gone, still she clings and

watches in the depth of her grief. Meantime, Faith and Reason, as represented by John and Peter, are seeking the Saviour's tomb. The intuition of faith reaches the truth the first; but pauses, needing no minute investigation of proof, nay, shrinking from such examination as presumptuous, until Reason, following, enters in, and traces the relics which serve as evidence of the fact. "Both wonder, one believes;" but while they go home to ponder these things, Love remains weeping by the empty grave; and to the intensity of that affection is the first actual revelation and consciousness of His very Presence vouchsafed.

Then follow those who reverently and lovingly dwell on the thought of His suffering, like the two faithful ones who walked to Emmaus, still with eyes sealed to the wonderful personal Presence of their risen Lord, until it suddenly thrills their hearts "in breaking bread," when they realize that verily "This is My Body."

All had their likenesses among the disciples, as—

"Thus, ever brighter and more bright,
On those He came to save
The Lord of new-created light
Dawn'd gradual from the grave:
Till pass'd th' enquiring daylight hour,
And with clos'd door in silent bower
The Church in anxious musing sate,
As one who for redemption still had long to wait.

"Then, gliding through th' unopening door,
Smooth without step or sound,
'Peace to your souls,' He said—no more—
They own Him, kneeling round.
Eye, ear, and hand, and loving heart,
Body and soul in every part,
Successive made His witnesses that hour,
Cease not in all the world to shew His saving power."

Then comes the inquiry—

"Is there, on earth, a spirit frail,
Who fears to take their word,
Scarce daring, through the twilight pale,
To think he sees the Lord?
With eyes too tremblingly awake
To bear with dimness for His sake?
Read and confess the Hand Divine
That drew thy likeness here so true in every line."

For there always was a great pity and regard for St. Thomas in Mr. Keble's mind. He dwelt on his words, "Let us go and die with Him," as a proof of the strength of his love for the Saviour; and used to think that his very earnestness and sincerity made him the more afraid to trust his heart where he had not been absolutely convinced—this slowness of conviction being owing to a certain dulness of perception. It was the strength of that love that bore the Apostle through his doubts; and it is to love that those who may be like him are bidden to cling, as that will bring clearness in the end.

"For all thy rankling doubts so sore,
Love thou thy Saviour still,
Him for thy Lord and God adore,
And ever do His will.
Though vexing thoughts may seem to last,
Let not thy soul be quite o'ercast;—
Soon will He shew thee all His wounds, and say,
'Long have I known thy name—know thou My face alway.'"

"Knowing by the name," is, as we are reminded by a note, always an indication of treating with especial favour; and it is by name that St. Thomas was addressed, when his doubts are graciously dispelled for the sake of the intense love that had held him fast, for his Lord's sake, to the little band, who were rejoicing in what his sad heart durst not accept.

But in the years between publication of the two books, doubt had become a far more besetting evil than when the first was written; and thus the second breathes far more of grave warning, though it is still tenderly couched, as though a reflection addressed to the young, according to the title, "Mistrust of Elders." The voice of the Church through "holy books, loving friends, and parents grave and kind," tells us of the high blessings that God offers; above all,

"How to God's Altar they have been
And found their Saviour there."

But worldly-wise, we too often will not accept such assurances; tradition and hearsay go for nothing:

"We will not see with others' eyes,
Ourselves would touch and feel."

The spirit of the age encourages us to be proud of this doubting spirit as a sign of acuteness and intellectual power, not of our being "fools and slow of heart;" and so it is that we delay the coming of the blessing; and if we ever receive it at last, it is dimmed from what it might have been to us, and what it is to the faithful.

Then we are reminded of St. Thomas's desire for perfect evidence, and what it cost him—no less than seven whole days out of the forty of joy and hope unrivalled upon earth; and at last when, for the sake of the love referred to above, His gracious Lord did vouchsafe to grant the full proof he had demanded, still it was with—

"A soft yet warning cloud,"

a shadow of reproof.

"My glorious Wounds I shew to thee,
Even here in earth's dull light;
But happier they, who wait to see,
Till Heaven have purg'd their sight."

And the concluding reflection is—

"Alas, that man his breath should lose
In wayward, doubting race,
Nor his still home in shelter choose
Where Thou hast set his place!"

Putting the two poems together, we may come to the conclusion that the writer regards Doubt and Incredulity with infinite pity as so much loss of time and blessing,

even where, as in the "Christian Year," he takes them as the genuine outcome of an anxious, hesitating, earnest nature; but where such feelings are cultivated, fostered, admired, even to the sporting with their subjects, the miserable consequence becomes so dreadful, the lost way so hard to retrace, that he scarce—in his reserved manner—dares to hint at the melancholy with which such contemplation fills him.

The Conversion of St. Paul.

THE elder poem of this day is in the first place a minute realization of the scene of St. Paul's conversion, passing midway into a meditation on the great answer, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest;" and thereby bringing home to us that whatever we do unto the least of our Lord's members is done unto Himself.

> "Christians! behold your happy state:
> Christ is in these, who round you wait;
> Make much of your dear Lord!"

The later one dwells on the question of the stricken Saul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" It is as it were on the practical outcome of the emotion of the heart, touched by the grace of God. The first step in repentance was to Baptism, and in after hours that same Baptismal grace will still—

> "cleanse thee every hour:
> Christ's Laver hath refreshing power."

Next, as Saul was sent to the holy man within the city, to be recovered of his blindness and joined to the body of the saints, there to learn what he was to do, so—

"Where Saints are met with one accord
The praises of high God to show.
In meekness learn their prayer and song,
Do as they do, and thou ere long
Shalt see the wonders they behold
In heavenly books and creeds of old."

But again, Saul spent three days in solitary fasting, darkness, and penitence, ere the healing touch came to him. So must our self-examination go deep.

"'What wouldst Thou have me do, O Lord?'
Think, little child; thy conscience try,
Rebellious deed and idle word,
And selfish thought and envious eye:—
Hast thou no mark of these? and yet
Full in thy sight His Law was set.
Oh, if He joy'd the Cross to bear,
With patience take thy little share."

The Purification.

VERY Spring-like, fresh, and bright, are the verses that celebrate this festival, like the snowdrops, that are its appropriate flower. So simple are they, too, that they scarcely need any word of comment on the truth they illustrate—that among all who thronged to the Temple, as on this day, the only ones who "saw their God" in the Infant then presented were the "pure

in heart," as represented by the Blessed Mother, Joseph, Simeon, and Anna; and in like manner, it is still only such as, like them, in purity of heart, are able to discern their God as presented to them in His Church—

> "Still to the lowly soul
> He doth Himself impart,
> And for His cradle and His throne
> Chooseth the pure in heart."

Again: in the *Lyra* we are brought into the midst of one of the sweet, sunny, smiling days, that sometimes already give promise of Spring, with their violets, snow-drops, and thrush-notes, though still in the midst of

> "The stern bleak months that lead the year."

Such a gleam befits the one rejoicing-day of our blessed Lord's Infancy, when His holy Mother ascended the Temple stairs.

> "Pure from her undefilèd throes,
> Her virgin matron arms inclose
> The only Gift the wide earth knows
> Not all unmeet
> For the dread place where now she goes,
> His mercy-seat."

Gladness, and songs of faith and joy, met her then; but just as our untimely February gleam dies fast away into mist and chill, so even with the glad prophetic greeting of Simeon mingles the dread prediction of anguish and sorrow, like a funeral knell sounding in the midst of a feast, or thunder in a summer night.

So let me be content though my lot be cast in shade,

"And learn of Mary's spotless Dove,
With moanings meek,
And soft wing gliding high above,
Thy Face to seek."

St. Matthias' Day.

THE qualifications of the two whom the Apostles chose to place before the Lord that one might be appointed in the stead of the traitor, become the text of a poem on the Christian ministry. The chosen priest must have been a close follower of his Lord, learning lowliness from His cradle, patience from His Cross, and feeling His Divinity in agony as well as in glory.

"But who is sufficient for these things?" It is only Christ's promise to His Bride—"And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world"—that could enable any to undertake the awful charge. None, uncalled by the Lord Himself, could dare; and that call must be certified by His hand and seal—that seal which is committed to His anointed heralds, that they may confer His commission to those who as kings and priests lead His armies and fight His battles.

Then saith the minister and good soldier of his great Captain,—

"fearless walk we forth,
Yet full of trembling, Messengers of God:
Our warrant sure, but doubting of our worth,
By our own shame alike and glory aw'd."

This is altogether a ministerial poem. That in the *Lyra*, entitled "Enacting Holy Rites," is of more universal application, describing how often the child's play betokens the bent of his future mind, and almost acts it beforehand; just as the streams which have part of their course underground will bear along on their current, when they come to the surface again, the "floating tokens" that have been thrown in near their source.

"Oh, many a joyous mother's brow
Is sadden'd o'er when sports are rife,
And watching by, she seems e'en now
The tale to read of coming strife.
Through lawless camp, o'er ocean wild,
Her prophet eye pursues her child,
Scans mournfully her Poet's strain,
Fears, for her Merchant, loss alike and gain."

Anxious she is if his inclination seem cast in these secular delights; how much more if he strive dimly to imitate the priestly functions? Then her hopes soar above the highest heaven, but her fears fall below the lowest deep; for what is so fearful as the lot of the false apostle, and those who fail like him?

"Cast ye the lot, in trembling cast;
The Traitor to his place hath past,"

was once said; and how should we not strive by prayer and fast that the "dangerous glory of the priesthood should fall only on brows worthy to retain it, and that

the boy's imitation of holy rites may be such an omen as were St. Athanasius' youthful instructions to his comrades on the sea-shore, when he baptized them in full earnest, and as it had been done in all reverence and simplicity, the Bishop of Alexandria deemed that the Sacrament need not be re-administered.

In such a hope the mother watches her son, praying for him—

> "in hope when most he fears,
> In trembling when his hopes mount high;"

and her prayers, wafted by her guardian angel, strike a chord above of more than angel sympathy.

For if there was unspeakable heaviness on the soul of the Saviour—

> "When with the Traitor in His sight
> His secret sad He told apart;"

yet when He spake of the treasures hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, it was with infinite gladness and thanksgiving; and such joy is with the Good Shepherd when His children shew His true tokens of mingled meekness and daring, as they whisper their part in chants of Heaven.

> "'Else,' warning Love cries out, 'beware
> Of Chancel screen and Altar stair.'
> Love interceding kneels in fear,
> Lest to the Pure th' unholy draw too near."

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

THE beautiful lines in the "Christian Year," though universally beloved, can never have been so well entered into as at present, since we are allowed to know that the grief that is spoken of in the first verse was the death of the poet's own mother; and that its alleviation was these meditations upon the sanctifying blessing, which the love between our blessed Lord and His holy Mother has left for filial and maternal love.

For it was the only near earthly bond of kindred that our Lord assumed with His human Flesh, and on the side of the ever-blessed Mother, although a sword pierced through her own heart,—

> "what mourning matron here
> Would deem thy sorrows bought too dear
> By all on this side Heaven?
>
> "A Son that never did amiss,
> That never sham'd His Mother's kiss,
> Nor cross'd her fondest prayer:
> E'en from the tree He deign'd to bow
> For her His agonized brow,
> Her, His sole earthly care."

There the original passes on into the thought of the contrast between that perfection and the shortcomings of any earthly son.

"Alas! when those we love are gone,
Of all sad thoughts, 'tis only one
Brings bitterness indeed;
The thought what poor, cold, heartless aid
We lent to cheer them while they stayed;
This makes the conscience bleed.

"Lord, by Thy love, and by Thy power,
And by the sorrows of that hour,
Let me not weep too late.
Help me in anguish meet and true
My thankless words and ways to rue,
Now justly desolate.

"By Thine own Mother's first caress,
Whom Thou with smiles so sweet didst bless,
'Twas heaven on earth to see;
Help me, though late, to love aright
Her who has glided from my sight,
To rest (dear Saint) with Thee.

"Thou knowest if her gentle glance
Look on us, as of old, to enhance
Our evening calm so sweet:
But, Son of Mary, Thou art there.
Oh, make us ('tis a mourner's prayer)
For such dear visits meet."

The last line of the last verse but one should be carefully read, to avoid a misapprehension of the meaning. It is part of the address to the Divine Saviour: "Help us to love aright the dear saint just departed to rest."

But "The Mourner's Prayer," was felt at that time to be too sacred and personal for general publication; and

therefore for these latter stanzas were substituted those beautiful, reverent, and melodious verses, beginning with "Ave Maria" which so exactly express the "all but adoring love" due to the holy Mother of the Lord.

The feeling with which that "Ave Maria" was uttered breathes throughout that poem, which wa sat first designed for the *Lyra Innocentium*, but omitted in deference to the opinion of friends. It is one of the most musical and poetical of all of the later times. The whole train of thought is inspired by a little boy's disappointed exclamation, "Mother not here!" The words find an echo in the thought on how many many days there might be the same feeling, that so far as reverent commemoration goes in our Church,—

"Our own, our only Mother is not here."

The child is soothed with assurance of his mother's speedy return at eventide. So the motherhood of the Church is present with us, and is dreamily realized by "tender trembling hearts," and patient faith in the communion of saints.

"And we for love would fain lie still,
Though in dim faith, if so He will.
And wills He not? Are not His signs
Around us oft as day declines?
Fails He to bless or home, or choral throng,
Where true hearts breathe His Mother's evensong?

"Mother of God! O, not in vain
We learn'd of old thy lowly strain.

Fain in thy shadow would we rest,
And kneel with thee, and call thee blest;
With thee would 'magnify the Lord,'
And if thou art not here adored,
Yet seek we, day by day, the love and fear
Which bring thee, with all saints, near and more near."

That is, the love and fear of the Head of the Body, through whom we are ever brought nearer to all the saints. The glory the Blessed Mother has won we see not yet; it is better for us to contemplate her kneeling by the manger, or receiving the message of the angel. From that moment "the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us;" and let man do his worst,—

"None may that work undo, that Flesh unmake,"

which made our Maker one with us.

"Thenceforth, whom thousand worlds adore,
He calls thee Mother evermore;
Angel nor Saint His face may see
Apart from what He took of thee."

That is our humanity, which is His for evermore; and thus we echo the name of Mary in our holy creeds; and we gaze on her in love on her own days. And further, the angelic salutation, "Hail, Mary, full of grace!" has ever been beloved and repeated by saints in all lands; with all the more reverence, that the blessed Virgin is the type of the Church, "the enthroned Spouse;" pure, yet the mother of all; born of Eve, and yet with Christ ever born within her.

"O, awful station, to no seraph given,
On this side touching sin, on the other heaven!"

Therefore,—

"Unforbidden may we speak
An Ave to Christ's Mother meek:
(As children with 'good-morrow' come
To elders in some happy home:)
Inviting so the saintly host above
With our unworthiness to pray in love."

But the final thought is, how pure we should be to presume to dream of that "spotless lily-flower;" how vain of musings without the stern touch of the sword that pierced her bosom.

We have not liked to break into these lovely verses with noting their controversial bearings, but it should be observed how reserved and guarded they are from any adoration, distinct from commemoration. The *Ave*, so dear to all saints in all lands, be it remembered, is merely the salutation, without the additions latterly made to it of direct invocation; and the repetition is an act of thanksgiving and reverence for the great mystery of the Incarnation, then commenced.

The subject of the verses that took the place of these in the *Lyra*, was a little boy of five years old, who begged that his baby sister's name might be Mary, "because he liked the Virgin Mary;" and on his mother's death a few days later, lay awake night after night in silence.

To him, then, the comforting words are addressed:—

"Thy heart is sad to think upon
Thy mother far away,
Wondering perchance, now she is gone,
Who best for thee may pray.
In many a waking dream of love
Thou seest her yet upon her knees above:
The vows she breath'd *beside* thee yesternight,
She breathes *above* thee now, wing'd with intenser might."

And it may be that the little spirit that had already given his love to the blessed Mary, might have power in the waking trance to dimly perceive—

"A holier Mother, rapt in more prevailing prayer."

But as in joy, so in sorrow, the loving child's heart turns to the home—

"Where God, an Infant, dwelt below:"

and better than all other consolation—

"are the soothings dear
Which meet thee at that door, and whisper, Christ is here."

For in delight or in grief, communion with Christ is the only calm.

St. Mark's Day.

ST. MARK'S DAY—Mr. Keble's own birthday—has two very beautiful and simple poems, both connected with that one flaw in the life of the holy Evangelist, John

Mark. That in the *Lyra* shews that thorough realization of the Scripture characters through combination of the different hints, that only could be attained by a mind thoroughly imbued with Holy Writ.

"A holy home" was Mark's, for his mother was one of the holy women of Jerusalem, in whose house prayer was wont to be made. That he was—

"Child of a priestly line,"

is inferred from his being nephew to Barnabas, a Levite. He grew up "where the vernal midnight air was vocal with the prayer of the Christians, who there met during the days of unleavened bread, and supplicated without ceasing for the life of their great Apostle sleeping in his chains and awaiting death. A valiant woman was she thus to open her house to the persecuted in the very hour of peril; a true sister of Joses, surnamed the Son of Consolation, who "having land sold it, and laid the money at the Apostles' feet."

"A holy home, a refuge-bower,
For Saints in evil hour,
Where child, and slave, and household maid,
Of their own joy afraid,
As parent's voice familiar own
The pastoral Apostolic tone.
'Tis heard, and each the race would win
To tell the news within."

For thither it was that St. Peter, when set free by the

angel, first directed his steps, and there it was that his knock started the Christians in their midnight vigil on his behalf, and the damsel named Rhoda, when she knew his voice, "opened not the gate for gladness."

Such a home was a blessed one to be bred in; but mark the warning:—

"Even here may lurk a snare."

There must come a time when the service of God will no longer lie in those tranquil paths, and when docility must give place to resolution. There may even be a danger that the love of home—unsuspected because at first a duty, and always amiable and innocent—may weaken the hands, unnerve the spirit, and hold us back from the work of God.

Of course the poet—always so careful not to say a word beyond what is written—does not say whether it were home-sickness or want of courage that caused St. Mark's failure in his first expedition with St. Paul and St. Barnabas; but the point is the same, the caution not to take religious training for religion itself.

The poem in the "Christian Year" is on the dissension to which that temporary defection gave rise; and so remarkable was the analogy to the author's own life, that Archbishop Longley could not refrain from quoting it on that St. Mark's Day that saw the foundation of Keble College.

Who can trust to the permanence of the closest friendship, if even two great Apostles and fellow-workers were at variance and forced to separate?

"Yet deem not, on such parting sad
Shall dawn no welcome dear and glad:
Divided in their earthly race,
Together at the glorious goal,
Each leading many a rescu'd soul,
The faithful champions shall embrace.

For e'en as those mysterious Four,
Who the bright whirling wheels upbore
By Chebar in the fiery blast,
So, on their tasks of love and praise
The saints of God their several ways
Right onward speed, yet join at last."

I had always been in the habit of applying these lines to Bossuet and Fénélon, divided by the unhappy affair of Madame Guyon, and never openly reconciled upon earth, though no doubt they have met above. But of the next verse—on the meeting of long separated friends not reconciled, for there had been no strife nor cessation of love—there was to be a very wonderful realization in the autumn of 1865, when the two who had once "seized the banner and spread its fold," and had since been in two separate—alas! often hostile—camps of the great army, met as white-haired men, so changed that at first they did not know each other! The trust in "such welcome dear and glad" in this world or the next,

had long been gathered from the lot of the "Companion of Saints,"—of St. Paul, St. Barnabas, and St. Peter—when the great soldier, in his last Epistle, summoned him to receive his last farewell, and gave him his approbation as one profitable to the ministry, leaving this great and hopeful example of restoration. Yet it is to the meeting to part no more that the poem looks forward with real trust:—

"O then the glory and the bliss,
When all that pain'd or seem'd amiss
Shall melt with earth and sin away!
When saints beneath their Saviour's eye,
Fill'd with each other's company,
Shall spend in love th' eternal day!"

St. Philip and St. James.

MAY-DAY is one of the remarkable specimens of the greater sunniness, if it may be so called, of thought that belongs to the poetry of Mr. Keble's later years. To be sure it is the children's holiday, and he has thrown himself into their childhood; but in his earlier poem—a very early one, we believe—there is only a pensive outlook upon middle life in contrast with the charms of childhood and old age. This is a youthful feeling, that makes the verses thoroughly sympathetic and congenial to the young, though we verily believe that the dust and weariness of middle age are more in anticipation than in reality, and that where health and spirits are fair,

the sense of fresh youth and enjoyment goes much further on through life than these stanzas would lead one to expect. That is, of course we mean, where the conditions are fulfilled.

"Who but a Christian through all life
That blessing may prolong,
Who through the world's sad day of strife
Still chant his morning song?"

Yet though experience may shew that "a merry heart goes all the way," the anticipation of dreariness under the heat and burthen of the day is almost universal in pensive youth; and the true answer to such a dread is here given in full force and beauty.

"O shame upon thee, listless heart,
So sad a sigh to heave,
As if thy SAVIOUR had no part
In thoughts, that make thee grieve.

"As if along His lonesome way
He had not borne for thee
Sad languors through the summer day,
Storms on the wintry sea.

"Youth's lightning-flash of joy secure
Pass'd seldom o'er His spright,—
A well of serious thought and pure,
Too deep for earthly light."

This seems to refer to the early tradition that our blessed Lord was never seen to smile. The gay hope,

the vast field of uncertain possibilities, so dear to our youthful imagination, could never be His,—

> "For He by trial knew
> How cold and bare what mortals dream,
> To worlds where all is true."

Then if our youthful glee is to be dimmed by sorrow and disappointment, dulness or weariness,—

> "grudge not thou the anguish keen
> Which makes thee like thy LORD,
> And learn to quit with eye serene
> Thy youth's ideal hoard."

Even if misfortune and affliction beset us, and our chosen happiness be denied, we need not over lament missing the joy "that Christ disdained to know." Life is not over, and joy will come out of sadness, hope brighten on us like the moon in the twilight, and—

> "Thus souls, by nature pitch'd too high,
> By sufferings plung'd too low,
> Meet in the Church's middle sky,
> Half way 'twixt joy and woe,
>
> "To practise there the soothing lay
> That sorrow best relieves:
> Thankful for all God takes away,
> Humbled by all He gives."

Most true is this picture of the truly lowly, to whom his best deeds, and the highest honours they win, are but fresh causes of humility.

And the middle tracks of life were surely still bestrewn with flowers when the bright summons was given,—

> "Come, ye little revellers gay,
> Learners in the school of May,"

with all its loving description of garland making. Thoroughly the Vicar of Hursley did love the garland day! The Hampshire children are wont to sing, or rather whisper, out a dull little croon consisting of—

> "April's gone,
> May's come,
> Come and see our garland;"

and this he touched with gold in the lines,—

> "April's gone, the king of showers;
> May is come, the queen of flowers;
> Give me something, gentles dear,
> For a blessing on the year.
> For my garland give, I pray,
> Words and smiles, of cheerful May:
> Birds of Spring to you we come,
> Let us pick a little crumb."

I do not know whether the children ever *did* sing these verses, I believe they had some carol found in a book; but they used to range themselves on the green lawn of the Vicarage, and sing together; and even the union workhouse sent its children with their garland, partly

made by the old women, and after its public appearance hung up to delight their eyes even in its decline.

For the "May Garlands" of the *Lyra*, merrily as it begins, soon turns to the theme of decay—

> "Where are now those forms so fair?—
> Wither'd, drooping, wan and bare!"

Yes,—

> "They are gone—and we must go;"

but though the flowers are for ever gone, we—

> "Hope in joy to be new-born,
> Lovelier than May's gleaming morn."

And the practical lesson is, that as—

> "Keen March winds, soft April showers,
> Brac'd the roots, embalm'd the flowers,"

so with ourselves,—

> "Stern self-mastery, tearful prayer,
> Must the way of bliss prepare.
> How should else Earth's flowerets prove
> Meet for those pure crowns above?"

St. Barnabas.

In both poems that version of the "son of comfort" is taken which explains it, not as the son of exhortation, but as the son of consolation; and thereby the "Chris-

tian Year" draws a picture of the world as a room of disease of body and mind, where none are so welcome as the "sons of consolation," whose gentle ministry is rather *felt* than perceived in any other manner, since they would "fain shun both ear and sight."

Such were the tender arms that cherished the Church in her earliest day; such the comfort they have learnt from the Comforter Himself.

It is the early Christian ministry depicted in all their tenderness, with "hands that cannot bless in vain," since through them their Lord's blessing is promised; and hearts that had undergone the same suffering, and had proved the consolations they bestowed. These first Apostles, like St. Barnabas, had closed the world behind them, and were solely devoted to tasks of love, free from care, and able to brighten the most showery times with their "store of quiet mirth." To lay new hearts before their Saviour was their first and dearest joy; and next, to draw souls together in love, as when Saul was brought by Barnabas to the rest of the brotherhood, and felt himself—

> "Never so blest, as when in JESUS' roll
> They write some hero-soul,
> More pleas'd upon his brightening road
> To wait, than if their own with all his radiance glow'd."

Such were Barnabas and his brethren; and though long since they have worn their crowns in heaven, still

in the Communion of Saints they are one with us, and in their hearts of sympathy—

> "We and our earthly griefs may ask and hope a part."

Surely it must be an additional joy among their many joys to know how the remembrance of them still cheers and blesses us, and how all the love and patience still existing here below is the continuation of the sparks they helped to light—yes, the devotion of the priesthood, and the comfort that such devotion enables them to carry forth to the mourners! For there is no *end* to the influence and power of holy words and deeds; and thus the—

> "saints, that seem'd to die in earth's rude strife,
> Only win double life:
> They have but left our weary ways
> To live in memory here, in Heaven by love and praise."

Single lines of this are unusually beautiful, and stand alone as jewels of the memory; but the general idea of the poem is not an easy one to grasp, though perhaps it may best be expressed as being on the tender comforting power of the ministry of the Church, derived from the Comforter Himself, and blessing us even to the end.

But the *Lyra* has to-day one of the grandest and most beautiful poems that the author ever wrote; one of those few later ones that to our mind rise far above

the "Christian Year" itself. The wealth laid at the Apostles' feet, gives to St. Barnabas' Day the glory of this noble appeal :—

"Christ before thy door is waiting :
Rouse thee, slave of earthly gold.
Lo, He comes, thy pomp abating,
Hungry, thirsty, homeless, cold :—
Hungry, by whom Saints are fed
With the Eternal Living Bread ;
Thirsty, from whose pierced side
Healing waters spring and glide ;
Cold and bare He comes, who never
May put off His robe of light ;
Homeless, who must dwell for ever
In the Father's Bosom bright."

Having given this magnificent antithesis to shew the unusual structure and ring of the stanzas, we must deny ourselves further quotation. Indeed, the poem is not hard to follow. The second verse shews the Lord in "kind ambush,"—that is, in His poor, (as typified in many a mediæval legend,)—coming to enable us to "make to ourselves friends," and obtain the prayers of the poor against the day of wrath. That treasure of works of love lies like the manna on the dew, and unless won and stored will quickly vanish. In the Offertory, as our great High-Priest, He demands, by the voice of St. Paul, the fruit of our week ; and those who respond to that summons—

"Open-handed, eagle-eyed,"

have His blessing now, and may best abide His coming at the last day.

Again, the free generosity of little children is a token from Him, whose members they are, of the love and open-heartedness that He delights in. They—

> "Nought enjoy but what they share,"

and have neither grudge nor care. In the great harmony of all things—as the moaning whisper of the winds sometimes blends with the music of lute or harp, or as the evening sky and autumn tints answer to one another, or in a landscape the chance position of a flower or leaf in the foreground aids the expression of the whole scene, whether for melancholy or joyousness,—so to some minds a playful child's spontaneous generosity may recall the free outpouring of worldly substance at the feet of the Apostles in the early days of burning love, especially by St. Barnabas:—

> "Son of holiest consolation,
> When thou turn'dst thy land to gold,
> And thy gold to strong salvation,
> Leaving all, by Christ to hold:"

He was first of those priests and monarchs who gave up their all in this world, and are reaping everlasting treasure above. At least I think this must refer primarily rather to the whole course of the self-devoted, than to the four-and-twenty elders of the Vision of

St. John; though of course, when these are said to cast their crowns before the Throne, we understand them to lead and typify all the offerings of honour, victory, or wealth, that ever were made from Abraham's to the end of the world. The continuation of the verse certainly refers to the saintly priests and kings whose noble offerings the Church still enjoys:—

> "Now in gems their relics lie,
> And their names in blazonry,
> And their forms from storied panes
> Gleam athwart their own lov'd fanes,
> Each his several radiance flinging
> On the sacred Altar floor,
> Whether great ones much are bringing,
> Or their mite the mean and poor."

Constantine, Clovis, Charles the Great, buried at Aix-la-Chapelle; St. Swithun, whose form does literally gleam athwart Winchester Cathedral (not his *own* fane though) from the "storied pane," as does that of St. Louis in his Ste. Chapelle;—multitudes of such names throng on us; but the conclusion, after appealing to us to give our utmost and most overflowing treasure, brings us to the recollection that our heart, or utmost, is the true gift, and that love is the measure, not the amount. Even "the blessed widow's part" needs atonement ere it be perfectly acceptable.

St. John the Baptist's Day.

By the Church is here meant the chosen of old. The first Elijah came when the decay of Israel under Ahab called for him; the second Elijah came when the restoration by Ezra and the patriotic zeal of the Maccabees had died away into Pharisaic hypocrisy and Sadducean liberalism; and we know that in our final dispensation, in some manner or other, Elijah will come again before the end, and "methinks we need him." "But where shall he be found?" The first Elijah, "wafted to his glorious place by harmless fire, has owned in Paradise the loved harbinger of Christ," and deathless himself, learns of him what was a martyr's death and glory—of him who came like the star before the dawn, and even before his birth owned the presence of her from whom Christ was about to spring.

There these two, so strangely alike, are, we may believe, interceding for God's Church still on earth, even though, as pain may not reach to the place of rest, the rebellion and evil below be veiled from their sight. Nay, since we live in the last days, and the twilight of the latter end is even now at hand, why wait for visible demonstrations? "The ministers and stewards of His mysteries," are called on to make ready and prepare the way, after the example of him who boldly rebuked vice, and patiently suffered for the truth's sake, having gathered

wisdom in his stern solitude, and proved his humility by his willingness that he should decrease as his Lord increased. Thus the underlying thought of the poem is of the three great reprovers—Elijah, the Baptist, and he of that further prophecy, which we do not yet understand, but which may be in course of fulfilment by the witness of the Christian ministry.

The conclusion is a prayer to Him who gave to the Church the wings of an eagle to take refuge in the wilderness from the dragon who would devour her children, that before the hour of judgment He would light up her watchfires, and make our ministers "turn the hearts of the children to their parents," and through them to their God, so as to burn with the flame of love.

The *Lyra* poem is on the mysterious joy of the unborn John, a joy of which the reverential poet of childhood traces the reflection in the bright unconscious gleams on the countenance of the newly-baptized babe, and the gladsome upward look and outstretched arm, as though seeing and greeting something far beyond our ken,—

> "Enkindling like the shafts of old,
> Where 'mid the stars their way they took."

The allusion is to the arrow of Acestes, which, in the funeral games on the death of Anchises, flew up into the "liquid clouds," burning as it flew, and marked its course with flame, as it mingled with the stars. The mother, perceiving such "upward gazing," has some-

thing of the spirit of the holy Elisabeth, rejoicing with her babe in the unseen Son of the blessed Virgin.

But the grave lesson is that the babe who thus thrilled at his Lord's coming, was a stern, self-denying, mortified hermit, set apart by strong discipline, and suffering failure and disappointment ere he attained to his glory-throne.

St. Peter's Day.

THIS poem is the one which has most of what has been called Scripture realization, the setting the imagination to develope, as it were, the scenes merely narrated by the terseness of inspiration. Here, of course, nothing can be more reverent and beautiful than the picture of St. Peter's sleep and dreams as he lay in his fetters the night before he was to have been given up to the fury of the Jews. The past scenes that might rise before him that night are recounted, the one look—

> "Sweetening the sorrow of his fall
> Which else were rued too bitterly."

Or again, the solemn scene by the Lake of Galilee, when the Good Shepherd commended His flock into his hands, and therewith foretold how he should follow in those footsteps to the "inverted tree." The very door of that suffering seems to have been attained,

the wakening to the day of death here and life above has surely come, but—

> "Not Herod but an Angel leads;"

and when his dizzy doubting footsteps had brought him to freedom and cool moonlight air, he returns—

> "The pastoral staff, the keys of Heaven,
> To wield a while in grey-hair'd might,
> Then from his cross to spring forgiven,
> And follow JESUS out of sight."

This poem, as is plain, goes no farther than the dwelling spiritually upon two memorable scenes in the Apostle's life, bringing them before us as having perhaps recurred to him in his dream. This, we need scarcely observe, is a very different thing from what the author always deprecated—the using all the powers of description of scenery, sensational writing, and familiar dissection of character and imputation of motive, to humanize, as it is said, but really to lower the saints of God in our estimation.

Boys bathing, pictured with tender delight in the fresh river beauty, and a playful meditative observance of their hesitation to take the plunge, lead on to the thought of the ship of the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee, and the fisher who went forth therefrom to meet his Lord upon the water; yea, to the one great ship wherein we were all embarked long ago, to float we know not

whither. "The candidates of heaven" seem primarily here to mean ordination candidates, though all that is said likewise in a measure applies to the *seal* of our choice at Confirmation. In fact, every turning-point in the life, when we have more entirely to pledge ourselves to our Master, is a call to venture ourselves out of the passive security in our ship, to *come* to Him as individuals venturing to walk alone across the waves to Him at His call.

Dare we make the effort, and venture forth, when the saint beloved as was only St. John, wavered when he saw the wind boisterous, cried out for help, and began to sink? Yea, for the same hand will "onward, upward draw." St. Peter's history becomes an augury of hope, in the next very remarkable verse, recalling how the bold venture of warm love soon became wavering, and yet in the sinking being raised by that hand. Thus his attempt foreshadowed the later act of affectionate daring, the faltering, the denial, the look that snatched the disciple back, the permitting the three confessions of love to make up for the three denials.

In each case the Apostle had let the zeal of strong love bear him into peril he had not faith as yet to endure. What love it was! eager to seek the Lord on the wild waters rather than wait for Him in safety. This is real love, ready to meet the Lord with cross and bleeding brow; anxious for *His* sake to feel the

cold water of danger and adversity, aware that all she gives is nothing worth, yet unable to rest till she has given all.

St. James's Day.

AGAIN the ventures of faith! again the pledge taken in the hope of the nearness to Christ in His glory involving nearness to Him in His suffering!

Through both the poems for St. James's Day this thought runs. The "Christian Year" places before us the entreaty of the two brothers—the warning reply, their promise, and the answer in return:—

> "Then be it so—My cup receive,
> And of My woes baptismal taste:
> But for the crown, that angels weave,
> For those next Me in glory plac'd,
>
> "I give it not by partial love;
> But in My Father's Book are writ
> What names on earth shall lowliest prove
> That they in Heaven may highest sit."

The lesson our hearts should thence take up should be that of meekness and self-contrast. Spiritual rapture needs to be subdued and chastened with the thought of suffering. Upon "Tabor's sun-bright steep" (for Mr. Keble always regarded Mount Tabor as the scene of the Transfiguration) the talk was of the Lord's decease, and He Himself immediately began to prepare the chosen three for the suffering; and thus we need not grudge

a few short years for the humble tasks of love in His Name which are to lead us upwards. The present happiness is now and then in some happy, holy death to trace the secret work of love, and for the future to hear the gracious call,—

"Come see thy place prepar'd in Heaven."

The joys of religion—like the glimpse of the Transfiguration—are granted to enable us to drink of the cup, and be baptized with that Baptism which prepares for the place in Heaven.

"And wheresoe'er you lift your eyes, the Holy Cross, they say,
Stands guardian of your journey, by lone or crowded way;"

Often had the Christian poet wondered what the effect of the Cross thus constantly gazed upon might have upon little children, and how it might deepen all their holier thoughts, and consecrate their lighter ones. "And now behold a token true." A maiden from a distant isle—that Ireland which had, at least till Fenian days, kept its faith fresh of hue,—

"Where old Devotion lingers beside the granite Cross,
And pilgrims seek the healing well, far over moor and moss,"

—an Irish maiden brought home from Italy a drawing of a little group that she had watched, a peasant girl lifting her baby brother to kiss the lips of the figure on a crucifix. And thereupon the thoughts are ascribed to the little sister, that the newly-baptized babe may

fearlessly claim his part in the Saviour, while there is more fear for the elder. Or again, the thought of the suffering may have been with her. Does not coming so near to the Saviour give a mysterious pledge that with His love must be shared His sorrow?

> "If of the dying JESUS we the Kiss of Peace receive,
> How but in daily dying thenceforward dare we live?"

Natural affection cannot choose but shrink at the thought, and ask the question whether it be right to lay upon the unconscious young life—

> "Such burden, pledging thee to vows thou never canst unsay,"

and picture the various forms of agony in which the Cross may come. Such must be the misgiving of love,—

> "when, stronger far than Faith,
> She brings her earthly darlings to the Cross for life or death."

Then may the Comforter be near such trembling love, to bring to her mind how the eternal rule, that glory must be won by suffering, was spoken by our blessed Master, when the Beloved Disciple, and the first martyred Apostle, were brought by their mother to crave the next seats to His Throne.

> "For her dreams were of the Glory, but the Cross she could not see."

Well was it for the mother and sons, that when they did understand the full force of their pledge, they had hearts to abide by it!

"Thy baptism and Thy cup be ours: for both our hearts are strong."

Yes, that song is the safest and the best for our babes, whatever it may pledge them to. Just as the mother's kiss is the first greeting in the morning and the last at night, so that kiss, bringing us to our Lord, is our only blessing. The sister may indeed trust her charge here —"here is the gate of bliss." True, though, of the three Saints who of old were permitted to kiss the Blessed One,—

"And each with death or agony for the high rapture paid."

His mother's embrace prepared her for the sword that was to pierce through her own soul; Simeon's hymn was his farewell; and the Magdalen's tearful touch preluded the time when she would weep over those Feet when pierced. So it was with all these; but what joy does not this shed on the path of sorrow, for—

"the nails and bleeding brows,
The pale and dying lips, are the portion of the Spouse."

St. Bartholomew.

WHEN Hugh Miller visited England, he unluckily fell upon a sermon preached on St. Bartholomew's Day, which discussed the question whether the Apostle were the same with Nathanael. Naturally, it seemed to the Scotsman an unprofitable question; unused to Saints' Days, he could not understand our eagerness to cherish

and apply any characteristic to the Apostle whose name alone is recorded, or our desire to feel that we may rightly place on our August festival the meditations suggested by the presentation of the Israelite without guile to the Saviour. If possible, this poem has rendered that interview yet dearer and more beautiful in our eyes by the thoughts it has connected therewith. The opening description is of the mirror, flashing out the rays of the sun in dazzling radiance, and yet, when turned away, perfectly reflecting every "small flower of bashful hue" towards which it is directed. In like manner, Scripture displays one glorious image in the intense brightness of holiness, and at the same time vividly shews—

> "The very life of things below."

So it is, that—as we are reminded in the quotation—we cannot dwell on Scripture without the sense (like what some pictures give) of an eye being fixed on us. It is continually searching into us, continually making us feel as if each were the only individual addressed; and this is verily one of the great tokens of inspiration.

> "'What word is this? Whence know'st thou me?'
> All wondering cries the humbled heart,
> To hear thee that deep mystery,
> The knowledge of itself, impart."

That conviction of the conscience makes the soul cry out, "This is the finger of God." The word that shewed

such intimate knowledge of the inmost self must be divine; therefore belief and worship must follow, provided the heart is simple, and without prejudice or pride. So it was with Nathanael when the Incarnate word shewed that perfect knowledge of his lonely hours beneath his fig-tree. He owned his God at once, and to him was given the promise thus interpreted for us :—

> "The child-like faith, that asks not sight,
> Waits not for wonder or for sign,
> Believes, because it loves, aright—
> Shall see things greater, things divine.
>
> "Heaven to that gaze shall open wide,
> And brightest angels to and fro
> On messages of love shall glide
> 'Twixt God above and Christ below."

This is the blessing to the simple-hearted guileless man! No path to him is crooked; he goes on from strength to strength, hearing and gathering up the many voices of the great cloud of witnesses, whom others fail to trace or comprehend, yet still loving better than all the voice which first revealed to him that he stood before the All-seeing Christ.

The meeting with Nathanael is, after all, not appointed by the Church as a Gospel or Lesson for St. Bartholomew's Day; and the *Lyra* poem is on the narrative in the Acts, which serves as the Epistle. It is not one of which the exact import is very easy to

define; it is suggestive rather than doctrinal, and seems chiefly to dwell on the all-pervading grace, flowing out on all sides from all that was connected with the saints, and through them with their Master. The hem of Christ's garment, the shadow of St. Peter touched in faith, convey virtue from the Godhead made Man—spreading forth the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land," and affording blessing to all who shelter under it.

St. Matthew.

ST. MATTHEW'S DAY is especially rich in the beauty of the poems inspired by the calling of the publican at the receipt of custom. To live in the world, but not of it, is the note specially attributed to the festival, scarcely more beautifully even here than in Anstice's verses:—

"O Lord, in this world's troubled way,
Thy children's course secure,
And lead them onwards day by day,
Kindly, like Thee, and pure.

"Be theirs to do Thy work of love,
All erring souls to win,
Amid a sinful world to move,
Yet give no smile to sin."

Never was there a sweeter picture of the dreamy bliss of pure hearts in seclusion than in the first verse, invoking the "hermits blest, and holy maids,"—

"To whom some viewless teacher brings
The secret lore of rural things,
The moral of each fleeting cloud and gale,
The whispers from above, that haunt the twilight vale."

Then comes the contrast with the city, and that wonderfully beautiful assurance that—

"There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime;
With whom the melodies abide
Of th' everlasting chime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

I am not sure that this is not the most perfect specimen of Mr. Keble's versification; but it is scarce reverent to interrupt the thought with this kind of technical observation.

The thought is the point, and carries us on to the encouragement for such as these, in knowing that when our Lord was scorned by the persons who were specially viewed as religious, and was heard by the "meek Publican," who at once gave up his store of gold, and in time poured the true riches of his Gospel forth for the Church for evermore. The like encouragement is found in the thought of St. Matthew's entertainment, and of the "worldly hearts and hearts impure," who thronged

round the Lord. These scenes do indeed give hope, even in gazing at "Mammon's gloomiest cells,"—

> "As on some city's cheerless night
> The tide of sunrise swells,
> Till tower, and dome, and bridge-way proud
> Are mantled with a golden cloud,
> And to wise hearts this certain hope is given;
> 'No mist that man may raise, shall hide the eye of Heaven.'"

While there follows his own peculiarly individual application,—

> "Shame on us, who about us Babel bear,
> And live in Paradise, as if God was not there!"

I have always believed the germ of "Looking Westward" to be in the memoir of Crabbe the poet, whose son tells us that his first remembrance of his father was hearing him and the other children say their evening prayers in his study, and rewarding them when they were attentive by a parting look at the sunset through a prism. The book where I read this belonged to Hursley Vicarage; and on my observing on the resemblance, Mrs. Keble replied in a manner that led me to think that "Looking Westward" was suggested by Crabbe's pretty custom, unfolding it, as it were, into the lesson that our eyes should be trained to admiration of heavenly, not earthly, brightness. For,—

> "So hastes the Lord our hearts to fill
> With calm baptismal grace,
> Preventing all false gleams of ill
> By His own glorious Face."

St. Michael and All Angels.

THE Festival of the angelic host is celebrated by a grand and glorious commemoration of the "services of angels." Invoking these blessed spirits, the hymn touches on all the occasions of their ministry to the Incarnate Son, and looks forward to the time—announced by the two angels—when He shall come again with all His host. No words of ours can make this noble hymn clearer; and we pass on to the *Lyra*, the title of which, "Carved Angels," as well as the latter half of the poem, shews that it was suggested by the angel figures with which Gothic architecture delights to decorate the interior of churches.

The commencement, however, is on the truth that the very slightest circumstance, if it be God's Will, often changes the course of a sinner, touches his heart, and thus saves his soul. Most especially has the innocent presence of a child been known to arrest or rebuke a crime, filling the guilty with an awe that may have come from the purity of the baptized child, watched over by his Guardian—

"One of the everlasting Thrones,"

(i.e. of the order of Angels called Thrones,) and "alway beholding the Face of the Father which is in heaven."

As in a drop of dew the sun himself is reflected, so

these guardian Angels may behold in their infant charges, created anew in the Divine Image, the likeness of the Bethlehem Babe.

"And so this whole fallen world of ours,
To us all care, and sin, and spite,
Is even as Eden's stainless bowers
To the pure spirits out of sight,—
To Angels from above,
And souls of infants, seal'd by new-creating Love."

Just as the clear blue of heaven is seen stainless in the sky above and the ocean, or pure deep water below, while all between is earth and earthy, so God is nearest—

"To strongest seraphs there, to weakest infants here."

The spirits of both are white-robed; and both alike, angels and infants in the cradle, are unharmed by the sight of sin, and evil shrinks away alike from both. And carrying on the comparison: as Angels wait—

"On Saints, so on the old the duteous-hearted boy."

Angels, too, keep up the eternal round of praise in heaven; and, in like manner, the little ones below are found in His Temple. [For, indeed, it is a constant experience, that little children from among the poor, willingly, and without invitation, wander in, and take their dreamy scarcely conscious part in the services of the Church.] And with such analogies, it was a true instinct that led to the modelling the representations of angels upon

infants, and likewise placed them where our prayers and praise may need the aid of Angels to be wafted on high. Thus, to remind us of the ministering spirits who keep watch around the Mercy-seat in heaven, carved angels bend around the Altars here below; so that the sight of them may recall and rebuke the unruly eye. Or they hold forth the scrolls impressed with sacred lore—sometimes in a language older than our own, but which may be interpreted to us; since it is the mother language which most perfectly expresses the thought. This seems to me to be the meaning of the verse. I know Mr. Keble *did* love a Latin or Greek inscription. He caused those in the Otterbourne Church windows to be in Latin—"*Quam dilecta tabernacula.*" "*Expandi manus totâ die,*"—and giving as a reason that it was the language more nearly of the Universal Church, and no doubt feeling the more perfect expression and allusiveness. When some objection was made that they would not be understood, he made answer that it was good for people to be led to look into a thing. And Latin, though not the original language of Scripture, is a contemporary language, and one of the very first spoken by our Mother, the Church. Again, these carved angels often bear shields with the instruments of the Passion, the blazonry of the Captain of our salvation; and then may we remember that they are His standard-bearers, and that one day we shall have to look on Him who was

pierced! So the Angel forms in church may remind us to purify ourselves in that Holy Presence—nay, Angel eyes are ever round, grieved at foul and idle whisperings—and by them we may believe hearts of innocence are made to shrink away, unseeing the sin that was about to touch, and of which they had never even dreamt. Such an instinct is about the pure minded. When we mark it, let us be rebuked for our sin, and seek to purify ourselves.

St. Luke.

HERE we have the contrast between St. Luke and Demas, both pupils of the same Saint, side by side in his cell in his first imprisonment, but in the last—alas! only Luke is with him, Demas having loved this present world. The thought leads to that which must often have wrung the hearts of many—the question why, when in all other cases results follow exactly upon given treatment, in the case of the human soul, the effects should be so entirely, often so piteously, diverse! So it is; and it is well, only too well, that we should take warning that to consort with a Saint gives no security.

"Vainly before the shrine he bends,
Who knows not the true pilgrim's part:
The martyr's cell no safety lends
To him, who wants the martyr's heart."

On the other hand, what a blessing waits on a true follower such as was Luke, the beloved physician, not only to the body but to the soul, delighting (as we are reminded in the note) to bring home to the contrite heart such messages of mercy as the parables of forgiveness! Like St. Luke, who treasured up for us the Song of the Angels and the Canticles of the Church, such a faithful spirit is verily worthy of entering into the gleam—

"That round the martyr's death-bed plays:"

and thus, while the world leads away its frail votaries, the true fond nurslings of the Church cling but the closer to their Lord and to her.

Next we have the bright sweet poem on "Lessons and Accomplishments," addressed to the Church,—

"Mother of Christ's children dear,
Teacher true of loving Fear."

The dedication of our talents is the subject. Observe the two clauses each connected with the Saint, as painter and writer. Like him, who, as tradition tells—with pencil as well as with pen

"true
Christ's own awful Mother drew;"

may our dreams and fancies of artistic beauty be pure, and to the praise of God.

And again, even as St. Luke recorded the most Holy

Life, and handed down to us the history of the foundation of the Church, and the doings of the Saints, so when—

> "o'er our childish trance
> History bids her visions glance,—
> Wonders wild in airy measures,
> Records grave from Memory's treasures,—
> Guide thou well the heart-winning line,
> *May our love and hate be thine.*"

This is a very notable sentence, and one that it would be well to carry with us in our judgments and predilections as we read. This is the way to find the true scale, and keep our mind from being warped by admiration of unhallowed genius, successful ambition, or that more specious liberality, which is really want of faith.

It is curious that, on the fact that St. Luke was a physician, there should be no clause in the poem for the consecration of science, except so far as it is included in the title, "Lessons and Accomplishments." In truth, matters relating to physical or mathematical science never did seem to come much before the poet's mind: I can only recollect one saying of his that had any relation to either. This was in a sermon, where he brought in the text from the first chapter of Ecclesiastes,—"That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered:" applying it as a token that Solomon had come to the points that have baffled all ever since his time—the squaring the

circle, and exact division of certain numbers by certain numbers.

In this poem—evidently, from its structure, just like that of "May Garlands," written more *for* than about children—he was placing himself in the child's point of view, and thinking of the actual lessons of our early days, rather than specifying the heads of the entire range of human study.

St. Simon and St. Jude.

THE opening of to-day's poem is one of the difficulties that is apt first to strike students of the "Christian Year," and in effect it requires to be understood that the blessed Virgin Mother is regarded as in some measure a type or emblem of the Church, so that what is said of the one applies to the other. The word "type" hardly expresses our meaning; but we know that whereas our blessed Lord was "incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary," so the new birth of the Christian member of Christ's Body is through the Holy Spirit and the Church. Thus in the Apocalypse, the woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet, who received wings to fly into the wilderness to save her child from the dragon, resembles the Israelite congregation at first, the holy Virgin next, and most fully

and entirely the Church, the mother ever bearing children, whom the dragon is ever waiting to devour.

With a mind thoroughly imbued with this accordance, the poet sees in the *Mater Dolorosa*—

"The Cross in sight, but Jesus gone,"

a type of the mourning Church, when the bridegroom is taken away, and especially in time of coldness of faith and suffering. Then as the beloved disciple took the holy mother to his own home, to tend and cherish, so the faithful few, in the time of distress, guard the Church and shelter her in the "genial isle" of their own households, where the Spirit of the dying Son is present. From such shelter new vigour springs forth. I think there must be some connecting thought here, the clue of which is lost. The verses look very much as if they had been suggested by some instance of a persecuted father of the Church being sheltered by some faithful friend to whom he formed a great contrast, through some evil times—say Bishop Ken at Longleat or the like—and on such a loving union and tendance between different characters; the poem then proceeds to describe the beauty of the "two and two," when—

"Fervent old age and youth serene"

join in praise, or when the high clear intellect is in close contact with the lowly and untaught; or again, when the sorrowful and afflicted is cheered by—

"Some spirit full of glee, yet taught
To bear the sight of dull decay,
And nurse it with all-pitying thought;

"Cheerful as soaring lark, and mild
As evening blackbird's full-ton'd lay,
When the relenting sun has smil'd
Bright through a whole December day."

Such responsive notes come to cheer—

"The lonely watcher of the fold."

Or his comrade's song of faith—the greeting from distant parish; or may be the trumpet-note of some more distant missionary, come floating on the air full of encouragement,—

"And bids thee yet be bold and strong—
Fancy may die, but Faith is there."

The "two and two" of this day gave it the above poem, its collect gave it what is one of the most beautiful of all the author's compositions—the similitude of the Church to the waterfall. It is simple while so full of grandeur, that we dare not attempt prose paraphrase or even comment, for every stanza is clear, even to the wonderful climax.

"Scorn not one drop: of drops the shower
Is made, of showers the waterfall:
Of children's souls the Power
Doom'd to be Queen o'er all."

All Saints.

THE influences of the season blend with the spirit of these stanzas, so that we always expect All Saints' to be a quiet grey day of leaves in autumn beauty, not yet fallen.

> "Each flower and tree, its duty done,
> Reposing in decay serene,
> Like weary men when age is won."

Here and there a golden or crimson leaf detaching itself and softly floating down, without the rude blasts that seem to be waiting—

> "Till the last flower of autumn shed
> Her funeral odours on her dying bed."

It is, as it were, a token of what St. John beheld—the four strong winds of heaven held by the angels from hurting the earth or the sea or the trees, till the full number of the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads.

So would Sodom have been spared if ten righteous had been therein; so the fire and brimstone were withheld while Lot lingered; so Rahab's house was marked with the crimson line; so the angel with the ink-horn marked those who should be spared in guilty Jerusalem; so not a hair of a Christian's head perished in the last deadly siege. Little do proud rulers guess the true safe-

guards of their empires, nor why the judgment does not fall on them :—

> "As bloodhounds hush their baying wild
> To wanton with some fearless child,
> So Famine waits, and War with greedy eyes,
> Till some repenting heart be ready for the skies."

So it is not by their own power or strength that the cities of earth stand, but by the secret prayers of the saints.

The *Lyra* has two poems. One is best commented on by a little saying of the author, recollected by L. H. : "I do like these heaps of leaves; they remind me of how I used to run among them and heap them up when I was a little boy." There must be a great deal of Fairford in this little poem, between the autumn leaves and the church windows, and the craving that all children feel to catch upon themselves the coloured radiance of some pictured saint illuminated by the sunshine. And there is all the man himself in the undercurrent of thought, that no one need ever find the services in even an almost empty church cold or dead, since the "great cloud of witnesses" are present.

> "The Saints are there :—the Living Dead,
> The Mourners glad and strong ;
> The sacred floor their quiet bed,
> Their beams from every window shed,
> Their voice in every song."

And if the church windows remind him of these, the coloured brightness that streams through them is to him the example—the likeness in the which he would seek to grow—the individual character irradiated by the Sun of Righteousness.

The other All Saints' poem rose out of an account of the ecstasy of the little boy who some time later became the subject of the verses called "Orphanhood." The first time he was out on a fine night, he kept clapping his hands and crying, "More stars!" and the childish exulting shout led to this deep meditation. First, to the analogy with the twinkling lights of earth, which may be lighting the shepherd on the heath, the busy street, the couch of suffering, the home of joy; but still—

> "If pure the joy, and patient be the woe,
> Heaven's breath is there, we know:
> And surely of yon lamps on high we deem
> As of pure worlds, whereon the floods of mercy stream."

Those orbs lead us to the thought of other stars—the stars who are the true children of Abraham, and turn many to righteousness.

> "Stars out of sight, souls for whom Love prepares
> A portion and a meed
> In the supernal heavens for evermore,
> When sun and moon are o'er."

So, as "more and more stars" seem to break on the gazer's eye, so are there really ever more and more

saints above to be perceived by the wistful eye of faith and love. To know of them,—

> "All humble holy gleams I bid thee seek,
> Dim lingering here below;
> So shall the Almighty give a tongue to speak,
> A heart to read and know
> Of Saints at Home, rob'd and in glory crowned;"

while even in the morning the dews that have fallen by night, sparkling in the sun, may remind us of midnight heaven's pure field.

Again, to our childish eyes, as to the childhood of the world, the stars seem to be gathered into fantastic shapes and constellations, or else as a great scattered flock.

> "But of a central glory sages sing,
> Whence all may be discern'd in clear harmonious ring."

I think this must have meant the Pythagorean theory of universal harmony and regularity, for it came before the idea was much spread abroad that one of the Pleiads is indeed the central glory around which all the apparently confused stars have their courses in due regularity. The similitude is to the seeming irregularity, and utter unlikeness to our dreams of the ways of saints; while, however, faith knows now, and we shall one day see,—

> "The orb whence all and each
> By golden threads of order and high grace
> Are pendent evermore, all beauteous, all in place."

Then again the milky way,—

"yon hazy arch,
Spanning the vault on high,
By planets travers'd in majestic march,
Seeming to earth's dull eye
A breath of gleaming air."

But even as that is resolved into thousands of separate stars, each perfect in itself, so is it with the great cloud of witnesses upon the glorious shore. Each one He, who "telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names," knows likewise by name; and the most unknown of souls may be shining as brightly, praying as strongly, as those whose great names shine on us like the mighty single stars of our heavens.

What an amplification of "the saints above are stars in heaven!" No wonder that when the stars brought such musings, the poet playfully wrote twenty years earlier:—

"I dearer prize
The pure keen starlight with its thousand eyes,
Like heavenly sentinels around us thrown,
Lest we forget that we are not alone,
Watching us by their own unearthly light,
To shew, how high above, our deeds are still in sight."

White Apparel.

THE Sonnets on "White Apparel" in the *Lyra*, answer, and more than answer, to the poems on the Ser-

vices for the "Christian Year." The noble poem on the "Holy Eucharist" brings to us at once the Divinity and close Presence of our Blessed Redeemer, and the fellowship of praise of all the Church, triumphant and at rest. There is a sonnet of Ken's that was so much loved at Hursley, and so entirely harmonizes with the lines beginning—

"And with them every spirit blest,"

that it cannot be omitted here:—

"Ye blessed Saints, sweet JESU'S Body glorious
From Abel to the babe baptized but now;
Ye that in Paradise take your rest victorious,
Ye that on earth beneath the Cross still bow.
Ye lightning-visaged Hosts angelical
Lo, at this holy Feast I meet you all
For earth and heaven are one in the Lord Christ,
Therefore I live for Thy dread Eucharist.
Though in your bounded sphere
Ye cannot single vot'ries hear,
And we in our distress
To simple saints make our address;
Yet if, like you, we heed
The Saints' Communion in our Creed,
We of each other's state have general view,
You *pray for* us, and we *give thanks for* you."

"Holy Baptism"—ever the joy of the author of the *Lyra Innocentium*—has a set of verses in which lie the whole germ of thought of the *Lyra*—the mother's deepened

and hallowed love, the privilege of taking home God's own child—

"To nurse for Jesus' sake,"

and the delight of watching the tokens of his Heavenly Father's love,—all these are the thoughts that underlie and prompt the greater number of the "Thoughts on the ways of Little Children;" and while all bright colours are blended in white, there is the possibility of all perfections of character in the little one who wears it, and must guard unstained his Sunday white.

"Catechism" gives a fragrance and poetry to the care for the children of the poor, which it is well to have constantly set before the young and eager, who are only too apt to lose the thought of the true meaning of the work in its drudgery. Fashion, too, is setting against it more than ever. Nay, more than fashion. The unbelieving world is striving to rob her little ones of the teaching of the Church, and only by individual influence and personal work, it may be, will it be continued. Well is it then, that it should be set before us what a *holy* privilege it is to teach Christ's little ones—

"What sages would have died to learn,"

and that if the "glorious truths" go far beyond their comprehension or ours, still the heart may follow far beyond what the tongue can explain.

"Confirmation" is less easy than the three preceding. The opening is a picture of the camp in the wilderness, beneath the shadow of the Pillar of Cloud that betokened the Presence of the Guide and Protector, "the Spirit of the Lord." When the cloud rested on the Sanctuary, the twelve banners of the tribes were planted, and all waited until It was lifted up, and—

> "Then to the desert breeze unroll'd
> Cheerly the waving pennons fly,
> Lion or eagle—each bright fold
> A lodestar to a warrior's eye."

Thus do the young soldiers of Christ pause before the strife, while the seal of the Holy Spirit is imparted to strengthen them on their way through this world.

The simile following must refer to some particular natural scene, really observed, but which it is difficult to make out from the description. The general drift seems to be, that the coldest, purest, (even freezing) water, best reflects the stars—divesting them of the mists that have rendered them indistinct in middle air, and this would stand for the self-sacrificing severity of high and pure zeal and love; while in another aspect, in the ensuing verse, the tender sweetness and peace of the loving heart is brought out—

> "As if the Dove that guides their flight
> Shook from her plumes a downy shower."

Might and sweetness, conflict and peace, are blended together in the influences of the blessed Spirit, whom the latter verses invoke to abide with us for ever, and daily renew us more and more, so as to bear us through this life; looking back to our Confirmation as one of our times of Refreshing from the Presence of the Lord.

> "And duteous maidens, skilful in Love's law,
> Unbidden use in stainless white to come:
> As doves, that to the bright clouds upward draw,
> Plume the soft lily breast, the more to win
> Of splendour from the Light's far cloudless home."

Here and there a white dove, with the pearly rainbow tint on her feathers, realizes this beautiful description.

Then, again, the sonnet telling how—

> "Joy and Love
> Have vow'd, to-day, their best on earth to prove,
> And Pureness, guardian sole of their rich store
> Of blessing and delight;"

yet warning us that "noisome beasts rove busiest, where Earth's rapture most runs o'er"—harmonizes well with—

> "There is an awe in mortals' joy,"

with its most exquisite rendering of the blessings in the Marriage Service; but the deepest and greatest of all Mr. Keble's poems on this subject is Hymn 212 in

"Hymns Ancient and Modern," a true and veritable calling down of a blessing from—

"The voice that breathed o'er Eden."

It seems to me, of all his poems, the most thoroughly adapted as an absolute hymn for a part of worship, ranking with the old hymns of the Christian Church, whose chime it has fully caught in the Invocation of each Person of the most holy Trinity, and the final allusion to the custom of crowning the married pair, universal, except in our Church, and there only alluded to by the bridal wreath.

The series on White Apparel touch on other white array, that of choristers and the priestly white, worn that—

"Angels waiting on our awful rites
Should in our frail and mortal Angel trace
Some hue of their own robes."

The "Ordination" poem in the "Christian Year" is like a continuation of that on Confirmation. The first line seems to allude to the opening verse of the 65th Psalm in the Bible Version, "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Sion;" or as Hebrew scholars make it, "Unto Thee, O God, is the silence of Praise:" as though there were an universal hush throughout the Temple, ere that beautiful Psalm of thanksgiving, evidently intended to be used at one, if not all, of the three great harvest festivals

of Israel, broke forth from the voices of the Levites. That silence, and the silence in heaven at the opening of the seventh seal, are brought into analogy with the silence for unuttered prayer at an Ordination, broken at length by the great Invocation, the *Veni Creator*[q].

The ensuing prayer calls upon the Holy Spirit for His sevenfold graces, specifying each, and that for which it is needed—a prayer from the very heart and experience of the writer.

There is a very noble hymn for Candidates for Holy Orders in the "Miscellaneous Poems," called a Hymn for Easter-tide, and written for the use of Cuddesdon College. The entreaty it embodies appeals to Him who blessed the schools of the prophets, and again to the—

> "VOICE, that, seeming earthly, summon'd
> Samuel to the awful tent;—
> HAND, that cast Elijah's mantle,
> Thine be all Thy Grace hath lent;"

and to the Presence of the Lord, training His own seventy ere their "hour of solemn unction," namely, on the day of Pentecost. The next allusion is most beautiful.

[q] Surely there is something most striking in the fact that this hymn—not sung as an ornament to the service—not merely, like all other hymns or anthems except the Canticles and the *Gloria in Excelsis*, intended indeed as praise, but left to choice—that this hymn, I say, an integral part of the Office and the actual form of invoking the descent of the Holy Spirit, should have been the composition of that great man who might well be called the David of the Church of Europe.

"God, and Father of all spirits
Whose dread call young Joshua knew,
Forty days in darkness waiting
With Thy servant good and true;
Thence to wage Thy war descending,
Own us, Lord, Thy champions too."

From this there is a transition to Isaiah's vision, where he received his mission from the Mercy Seat.

"Now Thou speakest,—hear we trembling,
From the Glory comes a Voice.
Who accepts the Almighty's mission?
'Who will make Christ's work his choice?
Who for us proclaim to sinners
Turn, believe, endure, rejoice?'"

Therewith comes the prayer for the lips to be touched by the Seraph—

"Veiled, but in his bright attire"

with the coal from the altar,—

"Sin-consuming, soul-transforming."

It is very beautiful to note how much the voice of the poet rose from meditation to hymn, properly so called, as he advanced in life; partly, no doubt, owing to the renewed craving of the Church for spiritual songs, but partly likewise from the upward breathing of the altar-flame of his heart. In many of the "Christian Year" poems he is listening to the Church,—

"To learn the sacred air, and all
The harmony unwind."

In the hymns of the last twenty years of his life, he has

so learnt the harmony as to have become a voice of the Church himself.

The "Visitation and Communion of the Sick" is one of the best-remembered and most precious for the soothing influence on sorrow, and the gentle flow of the verses, so entirely realizing the motto of the whole book, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." The great and endearing charm of the poem is, that it is so exactly what belongs to any truly peaceful Christian deathbed, that all may have seen, or may hope for, the like.

The sonnet on the Winding Sheet's whiteness gathers all the other white robes together, ending with the warning,—

> "Yet all is vain, if the last glory fail,
> If with the cold pale shroud the Font's pure beam
> Blend not, and o'er all hues of death prevail."

The verses on "Burial" that came out of the poet's heart of hearts were those called forth by the burial of his sister Mary Anne.

> "I thought to meet no more, so dreary seem'd
> Death's interposing veil, and thou so pure."

They, to the last lines—

> "O cleanse us, ere we view
> That countenance pure again,"

are so entirely what seem to come from the very soul

of every mourner, that from their own individuality to himself he shunned giving them to the world in the "Christian Year," and gave us instead one of his characteristic compositions, beginning with a beautiful bit of scenery.

Old Otterbourne Churchyard, as it was in the time of his first curacy at Hursley, with the exception of the mullions proud, was exactly like the description; railed in on three sides by wooden rails, and on the fourth with a steep bank on which grew several fine elm trees, overhanging a clear stream of water, while burnished ivy and fresh green moss were to be found in only too large quantities on the little picturesque old building. The real locality is, however, I believe, Burthrope, which had much such a church and river. The verses, passing as usual from description of the spot to the power of the Church's words, carry us on to the lines, so precious to us all as to be continually in our thoughts,—

> "'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
> Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
> How grows in Paradise our store."

And no less full of encouragement is the amplification of the last verse of the burial Psalm, "Prosper Thou our handiwork:"—

> "Then cheerly to your work again
> With hearts new-brac'd and set
> To run, untir'd, love's blessèd race,
> As meet for those who, face to face,
> Over the grave the Lord have met."

Gunpowder Treason.

In the first edition of the "Christian Year," there were no State holidays. Afterwards the four poems were added; and among them that which belonged to that strange national holiday, which by commemorating the escape of the Parliament and the landing of William of Orange together, was wont, as Mr. Keble has been heard to say, to begin by calling treason a vice, and to end by calling it a virtue.

However, his verses have little enough to do with either James or William; they are a meditation upon the Church of Rome, perfectly true as well as beautiful, and what—except the one line that he found was misunderstood—he adhered to all his life, though whether he would have *written* the poem in his latter days, is quite another thing, as indeed he gave up the keeping of the day itself long before it was dropped from the Prayer-book.

The idea is the same as in St. Simon and St. Jude, of the Church standing mourning by the Cross, and then passing on journeying westward, and bearing the cross of sorrow on her brow. For surely it must be a sorrow to her to see tender hearts spend upon saint or angel the love and devotion that should go higher. Nor can there be the least doubt that many do so, though observe, this is not saying either that all honour and reverent greeting

to the saints should be omitted, nor that ALL Roman Catholics necessarily exceed in their devotion to them. Again, the persecutions unto the death in the cause of Catholicity are, beyond all doubt, a sin and error. And surely the whole body yearns and grieves over those who doubt, and if they be patient and love on, will in time heal them and stablish them. For the Church's—

> "Gentle teaching sweetly blends
> With the clear light of Truth
> Th' aërial gleam that Fancy lends
> To solemn thoughts in youth."

The lines are a most happy exposition of the peculiar manner in which true Church teaching satisfies at once the faith and the imagination. The next verse does not disavow the possibility of some purifying change passing over the departed spirit, though it speaks of the relief from the necessity of believing in the systematized purgatory which Rome has impressed.

And then comes the verse whose meaning he meant to be,—

> "There present, in the heart
> Not *only* in the hands, th' eternal Priest
> Will His true self impart."—

but which was understood and used as an argument against the Real Presence. He had preached and written one way, but it was a true case of "a verse may catch him who a sermon flies;" the verse was familiar

to hundreds who perhaps had never even heard of his book on "Eucharistic Adoration," and it told more than the whole weight of argument. He had been used to consider the "Christian Year" as a work completed and done with at a certain stage of life, and which must stand (as he viewed it) with all its faults on his head; and what with his reluctance to discuss it, his exceeding humility, and his familiarity with real books of divinity, he probably had no idea what a theological authority it had become till it was forced upon him by the public quotation of the verse. The alteration had been talked of before; but it is needful to be very alert to *catch* a new edition at the right moment for making a correction, and thus it was not accomplished until the first which followed upon his death.

"The more really, because spiritually present," is the thought intended to be conveyed; and valuing the reception in both kinds, as did this true son of the English Church, he did indeed strive to guard all who looked to him for counsel from deeming that our mother's genial wing was but error's soothing blind. There are some now who take offence at the line—

"Speak gently of our sister's fall,"

written as it was at the time when scarcely even the most Catholic-minded English Churchman could speak of Rome otherwise than abusively. But there is no

reasonable doubt that a fall there was. The fifteenth century was a terrible age of falling, and the Reformation was the consequence of that fall. Whether we rose again in it exactly as our self-complacency used to suppose, is another question; but there is no doubt that both Churches have need of "patient love" to draw them nearer day by day, and make them both prove the surer way of unity.

King Charles the Martyr.

DURING all Mr. Keble's earlier years at Hursley he regularly kept the day of King Charles's martyrdom, and very reverential as well as tender was the spirit in which he always regarded "our own, our royal saint."

To hold Charles blameless through all the perplexities of a period which could hardly have helped being one of conflict and revolution, was not possible; but that young generation—who have been bred on writers starting from the Liberal side—can have no conception of the feeling compounded of reverence and tenderness that was bequeathed by the Cavaliers to their children, and which has not yet entirely died out, for the "White King." He might not indeed be sufficient in ability to cope with troubles that had been brewing for a century—not a judge of character—not firm or resolute in nature—and not original enough in mind to perceive

that the "king-craft" practised and recommended by generations of monarchs and statesmen was no better than falsehood. He was *not* many things that he might and ought to have been; but if he wavered and contradicted himself, if he even sacrificed his friend, there was one point on which he was firm—concerning his God. For the Church and her rights, he resisted as he resisted nowhere else, and with the constancy of a man who had been her devout son throughout his reign. All along, his errors were those of infirmity and perplexity; but the heart was faithful to his God, and full of pardon and patience; and thus it was that he was full of that calm dignity and sweetness that so deeply impressed and filled the hearts of his supporters, and thrills in many a breast even to the present day.

So it is that the spots where traces of Charles are found are dear to us, and make our hearts beat faster, and we feel him doubly our own, as having lived on, and died for, our own identical Prayer-book; "the self-same devotions as our own," refusing to interrupt our own daily service even under the shock of the intelligence of his friend's death; and gathering comfort at the last from finding that the Lesson for the day of his death was that which he would have chosen as most precious to him—the twenty-seventh of St. Matthew.

And though our country has ceased to call the Church

to offer "her maternal tears" for him, yet still the Lesson continues to tell of the Cross, and—

> "Calls us, like thee, to His dear feet to cling,
> And bury in His wounds our earthly fears."

The Restoration of the Royal Family.

ANOTHER of the discarded State holidays is here; and both the commencement and the note upon it carry us back to a disused state of things—when it was needful to explain that the organ is generally silent in Holy Week, and that in *some* churches it is the custom to put up evergreen boughs. Anything more festal was not then thought of, and these verses endear the Easter yew and box of our childhood.

> "The while round altar, niche, and shrine,
> The funeral evergreens entwine,
> And a dark brilliance cast,
> The brighter for their hues of gloom,
> Tokens of Him, who through the tomb
> Into high glory pass'd."

To these sober tokens of death and victory is compared the return of our Church from her captivity and exile in 1660, when the absence of the martyred king was felt by all true and loyal hearts, who would dwell on his prayers and devotions, as in the *Eikon Basilike*, and long that those intercessions might yet be returned upon their heads.

And again, the saintly Dr. Henry Hammond, whose "Practical Catechism" King Charles recommended to his daughter in his last interview, who after cherishing the faith and constancy of his countrymen by his books, counsels, and ministrations, through the long years of desolation, was lying on his most painful but most patient deathbed, in the midst of the preparations for the Restoration. He died on the 25th of April, 1660, the day on which the remnant of the Long Parliament re-assembled to decide on bringing back the King. His last sigh for rest was, a few moments before his release, "Lord, make haste!" His "serious sweet farewell" to the children of the house at Westwood, where, since his deprivation, he had been cherished, was the injunction "to be just to the advantages of their education, and maintain inviolate their first baptismal vows." To their mother, when she asked what more special thing he would recommend unto her for her whole life, his answer was, "Uniform obedience." Surely to follow these rules is the way "after him in time to rise."

The next verse is a perplexing one. We used to think it referred to the Epiphany offering of the king in the Chapel Royal, which under George III., when it would first have grown familiar to Mr. Keble, was a really impressive ceremony, chiefly on account of the reality of the good old King's devotion. Others, however, believe it to refer to the celebration of this day itself; but it may

also mean, more generally, the entire acknowledgment that it is through God that kings reign and princes decree justice. The signification of the verse seems to be somewhat in the spirit of St. Peter's words, reminding us that we are but strangers and pilgrims in this world, and that though we are bound to "submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake," "whether it be to the king as supreme," and therefore all loyalty is required of us, yet our time here is too short for hope or care to be worth spending on self-aggrandisement or political ambition.

The Accession.

THE Accession Day has led to the composition of a poem whose lines often return on the ear with a most soothing and encouraging echo. For the prime thought is one that every one needs in time, save they who are taken away in earliest youth.

Not only the newly-made sovereign feels, like Solomon of old, that he knows not "how to go out or come in," or falls on his knees like poor Louis XVI. with a cry for help under the burden of a nation's woe, feeling the loss and bereavement above all; but every one who has loved, obeyed, trusted, and reverenced, has heard, in turn, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take thy master away from thy head to-day?" and has needed

the same voice that spake to Joshua, "I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee."

That confidence is the one Rock to cast anchor in amid the floods—the one torch in a tempestuous night—the one unchanging evergreen among the fading trees. To many a faithful king it has so proved—to none less than to the unfortunate sovereign we have referred to above, sensible of his responsibility, but physically and intellectually incapable of rising to it, unable to take pleasure even in the splendours and gaieties of his prosperity, and doomed to drink to the very dregs the cup of woe that the vice and tyranny of his forefathers had filled for him. But "the Cross supports them" all. The fate that was outwardly retributive justice was spiritually martyrdom!

And if such were the case with Louis XVI., what lot may not be brightened by the Cross?

But this has led us from the text of our poem, which turns from the orphaned king to the feelings of those who take the place of true pastors, and tremble at their own inferiority, and thence to all who succeed to any place of trust in the sense of their own weakness and inefficiency. To all alike there is the one sure encouragement, "Be strong and of a good courage: I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee."

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